

# **STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS** **ANONYMOUS**

This study guide is one member's view of the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. It was assembled for the purpose of assisting A.A. members I sponsored to study the Big Book and embrace the Twelve Steps of Recovery. Through this process I pray the members will find their own way through the spiritual truths contained in the Big Book and achieve lasting sobriety and happiness.

Yours in Love and Service,

Garnet W.

Disclaimer:

"Publication of this work does not imply affiliation with nor approval or endorsement from Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc."

This guide was originally written in about 1982. In 2021 I had the privilege of facilitating a small group study series on the twelve steps. We then moved on to study the Traditions and the Concepts. I had mentioned that the step study guide should be updated to meet the computer age and the verbiage could also be enhanced. I lacked the ability to do this.

In January 2022 I received a draft copy of the original guide from Bob B. It was everything I had thought about and asked if we could get it printed. Of course, I was informed that it was only a draft and required lots of work, so we made a few calls and soon had a small committee that knew what they were doing. Our first meeting to discuss this was January 6, 2022. Bob B., Janice F., Lori R., Randy M., and I were on Zoom to figure out what could be done. Bob quietly took the lead and we followed. As we moved along Aiden W. was asked to join and he jumped at the opportunity. Hours of homework and discussion took place from that night on to completion in May.

We met every Wednesday evening to review and rewrite. Bob kept this all up to date on the computer.

For years I knew this had to be done and prayed it would happen. This small but enthusiastic group was an answer to a prayer, and I thank God for bringing them together. My bucket list is now much shorter. I have been in A.A. since July 1966 and feel that with God's blessing and the input from Bob, Janice, Lori, Randy and Aiden this could be the biggest 12 step call I will ever make.

Forever grateful.

In Love and Service,

Garnet W.

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This study starts at the front cover of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous and continues through to page 103.

Permission was given, from GSO (General Service Office), to use some direct quotes from the Big Book. These quotes are identified by ***“Bold Italic Font in quotations”***

It is arranged so you will study page by page and paragraph by paragraph. In this way you will learn to use all the information and direction in the Big Book. The Big Book is designed to help you recover from the illness of alcoholism and deal with the living problems you will face in the future.

The Big Book is not a pocket novel which you read once and then talk about. It is the "textbook of life" for the alcoholic and, just like other textbooks, it must be studied and learned.

You will require a pencil, scribbler, highlighter, dictionary and the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

This study is organized to assist you to work from the front cover of the Big Book (hard cover) through the forewords and then the chapters:

- ✓ **The Doctor's Opinion**
- ✓ **Bill's Story**
- ✓ **There Is A Solution**

We then continue through the twelve steps which conclude on page 103.

This Study Guide has been revised to provide links to The Big Book, and other references. These links are shown with a blue/purple colored font, simply click the word and you'll be automatically taken to the text. For example, [Step Four work sheets](#). To return to the Table of contents click [TABLE OF CONTENTS](#) at the bottom of each page. Where the link takes you to the Big Book you'll be connected to the internet, to return to your Study Guide close the page on your toolbar.

Click here to close.



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## 2.0 HISTORY AND INFORMATION

On the jacket of the Big Book (hard cover) it states, "***This is the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, the Basic Text for Alcoholics Anonymous.***" (This depends on which edition you have.)

Using your dictionary find the meanings of the words **basic** and **text**.

Read the information on the front and back jacket flaps of the hard covered Big Book, if you have it.

When you finish, turn two pages and there you find the introduction and good news for the alcoholic, "***This Is The Story of How Many Thousands of Men and Women Have Recovered from Alcoholism.***"

Are you interested in becoming Recovered from the illness of alcoholism?

As you study, highlight or underline all information you think is important. Doing this will help you remember details.

Look up the word "focus" in the dictionary. This is what you will have to do for this study to get the most out of it. Stay focused on studying the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

**Make a quick review of the contents. Study the preface and the forwards to all four editions.** You will understand the sequence of the Big Book and some of the changes which have been made since the first publication.

### 2.1 FOREWORD TO FIRST EDITION

***"We, of Alcoholics Anonymous, are more than one hundred men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body."***

At times you may hear statements like, "you cannot recover from alcoholism." Well, don't believe this. The main purpose of this book is to show you precisely how alcoholics have recovered.

Believe what you read in this book and don't get caught up in the teachings of outside agencies. This is A.A.

***"To show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the main purpose of this book."***

Remember, this is the only book written with this purpose. As you study you will find each of the "**Twelve Steps**" have a definite purpose which, if followed, will assure your recovery.

### 2.2 FOREWORD TO SECOND EDITION

As you study this foreword you will learn about our history, the rapid acceleration in the membership, the struggles which took place as this fellowship grew, how the traditions were finally introduced and the way to carry this message so other alcoholics can receive the information and start the A.A. way of life. As you learn about how people from outside the fellowship helped us, you will then understand why everything was in place when you arrived and asked for help. You may even find it easier to accept the full A.A. program and be more appreciative for what you have today.

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## [2.3 FOREWORD TO THIRD EDITION](#)

I often wonder if this fellowship would be here today if people like you and I had to go through the trials and problems Bill and Bob did to get A.A. going. Would you have stuck it out to the end? Are you already thinking this may be too much to do at this time as an excuse to quit?

Few members study the history of this fellowship. Stop now and go for coffee with someone who has been around for a few years. Share with them about the history you have just studied.

## [2.4 FOREWORD TO FOURTH EDITION](#)

When you have finished this make notes about the growth and changes that have occurred within A. A. from the time of the first edition through to the fourth edition.

**GET GOING, DON'T JUST SIT THERE, IT'S COFFEE TIME.**

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## 3.0 THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

*The Doctor's Opinion* will require some concentration, so get your highlighter and mark the parts you think are important. In this chapter you will learn about different types of alcoholics, the illness, and the mental makeup of the alcoholic. You may even find yourself in here.

Do a thorough study so you will understand the medical aspect of this illness, which is implicit throughout all the steps. Make notes or write in the column of your Big Book.

The more you do, the more you will remember. Don't shortchange yourself by being lazy or getting information second hand. Use the Big Book.

### NOW OPEN THE BOOK AND STUDY "THE DOCTOR'S OPINION."

- ✓ Did you notice in the letter the doctor states, "***This man and over one hundred others appear to have recovered.***" All through this study you will read about being recovered.
- ✓ Notice that it did not say cured or recovering. You read in the first foreword that other alcoholics have, "***recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body.***"
- ✓ On the third page he then writes, "***They believe in themselves, and still more in the Power which pulls chronic alcoholics back from the gates of death.***"
- ✓ Can you or do you believe in this Power?
- ✓ Study to the bottom of the sixth page for a full explanation of the medical aspects of this illness, alcoholism.



**STOP!!**



**- REVIEW ALL YOU HAVE JUST STUDIED.**

**Note:** the doctor states in the third paragraph, "***Frothy emotional appeal seldom suffices. The message which can interest and hold these alcoholic people must have depth and weight. In nearly all cases, their ideals must be grounded in a Power greater than themselves, if they are to re-create their lives.***"

This is exactly what you will do as you study and do each step. You will grow and find a way to re – create your life so it does not have to include the consumption of alcohol.

Further on it states, "***Men and women drink essentially because they like the effect produced by alcohol.***" Read to the end of the paragraph on the next page.

Identify the "**effect produced by alcohol**" in your own life by listing several effects or positive feelings which you received and then searched for when you drank again. The effect will be what alcohol did for you, not what it did to you, or caused you to do.

Study the rest of this page. As you go through the study, the word "effect" will have a deeper meaning than you recognize today. Keep note as you identify the "effects" as you study.

At the top of the sixth page, the paragraph concludes, "***These men were not drinking to escape; they were drinking to overcome a craving beyond their mental control.***"

Study this page again so you can fully understand that there are different types of alcoholics, and they all have 'one symptom' in common.

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What is that symptom?

The doctor explains it as a "**manifestation of an allergy.**"

Do not be afraid to mark your book, record notes or write questions that come to mind. Keep this information and, as you work through this, the study should answer any questions you have.

Finish studying to the end of "The Doctors Opinion."

Review it all again. Take your time. It is very important for you to get an understanding of the illness. This will help you break the 'denial barrier' which will play a very large part in your recovery from the illness of alcoholism.

To this point you have reviewed and studied the Preface, the Forwards and The Doctors Opinion. All this information is important so you will understand what Alcoholics Anonymous is, and how it will affect your recovery.



- **GO SOMEWHERE AND ENJOY A BREAK.**
- **HAVE A CUP OF COFFEE**
- **TAKE A WALK.**

As you do this study you will find when you go back after a break and review the material, you will always discover more information. At times you may wonder how you could have missed it. Well don't worry, this is growth and I hope this experience continues for you in the years to come.

## **REVIEW TIME:**

Now take the time and read all you have studied and written. See if there is anything you missed. You may even find it will make more sense than the first time you studied it.

Your recovery is in doing the twelve steps. However, the book has been written so you first get to know the history of A.A. and some information about this illness. Otherwise, all you have are the twelve steps without a foundational understanding of what A.A. is or where it came from.

## **ANSWER THESE FEW QUESTIONS AND MAKE NOTES:**

1. How do you really feel about this exercise so far?
2. Do you feel it is wasted time?
3. Did you make notes to yourself about the parts you doubt and want to ask questions about later?

## **THERE ARE THREE LEGACIES TO A.A:**

- ▷ **RECOVERY** the Twelve Steps to which this study relates.
- ▷ **UNITY** the Twelve Traditions.
- ▷ **SERVICE** the maintenance of the A.A. program.

When you talk to other people about your recovery from alcoholism, be careful not to get 'treatment program philosophy' confused with the A.A. program. They are different and it's good to be aware of this.

**Share what you have learned, and you will learn more.**

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## 4.0 BILL'S STORY

Bill's Story, the co-founder of our fellowship, was written by him when the Big Book was first published. (Bill died in 1971.) As you read this story do not try to compare yourself to him; rather seek to identify the similarities such as the emotions, lack of control, desperation, depression, confusion, the wish to change, false hope and final surrender etc.

First, read the full chapter to get a good understanding of the type of person Bill was, what happened to him, and the hard work required putting A.A. in place. This story is only sixteen pages long.



**READ THE FULL CHAPTER NOW!**

Now that you have finished, get ready to study it. Get your pencil and highlighter, and as you study, mark your book so you will be able to refer to the highlights and the parts you found to be of the most interest to you.

As you read this chapter you will notice Bill writes in a very precise manner. His story explains what it was like, what had happened to him and what he had to do to stay sober.

Make notes about Bill's Story, such as his youth, dreams, education, and ambitions, his drive for success and the start of his drinking, his failures to escape from drinking, his meeting with Ebby, the friend who called on him, his broken promises to his wife, etc. See if you can identify with some of his actions, expressions or feelings and the progression of the illness up to the point you have reached in your own alcoholism progression.

Do not rush to finish this chapter. It contains important information for your future understanding of this program.



**STUDY THE FULL CHAPTER NOW!**

There is much information in the Big Book before the Steps. Studying this will help build a solid understanding of A.A. You will become aware of the illness, the purpose of A.A. and the results you can expect from the program if you work as the Big Book directs.

You will be better prepared and should be able to understand and accept the 12 step program as it is. There will be no surprises only good results for a long time, if, you do what the program suggests.

Each one who studies Bill's Story gets deep insight into the man and the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. Some of the revelations are brought out on page 12.

On page 12 Bill explains, "***It was only a matter of being willing to believe in a Power greater than myself. Nothing more is required of me to make my beginning.***"

1. Are you willing to try this?

**The next paragraph explains his experience with the acceptance of a God which is personal in his life and then how a new world came into view for him:**



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2. Read this paragraph again and think about how you feel. Do you think this is a spiritual experience?

**The last paragraph on page 12 explains his acceptance of God, and then the loss of his brief experience and the reason why:**

3. Can you identify or has this ever happened to you?

**The second paragraph on page 13 explains Bill's surrender:**

The rest of the page explains Ebby's second visit to Bill and what was discussed, and the directions Bill received.

**Page 14 he talks about the result:**

In the second paragraph he explains his experience. In the third paragraph he explains his doubt and the need to check his sanity.

**The next two paragraphs explain:**

- 1) How the doctor understood the spiritual experience,
- 2) And Bill's immediate unselfish thoughts for other people like himself.

**In the last paragraph on page 14:**

Bill explains how the alcoholic must perfect and enlarge his Spiritual life.

In his story you will find explanations for statements made in the first part of **How It Works**, Chapter 5, which will come later.

**Page 15, in the first full paragraph:**

He explains the start of his 12 step work and the results of this type of action.

**The last half of this page and page 16:**

Describes some of the results, both good and bad, which happened to some of the first people involved with the program.

**WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED STUDYING, ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:**

1. What was the main message which stuck with Bill about his own drinking?
2. What impressed Bill most about Ebby's message?
3. What did the doctor say to encourage Bill?
4. What was Bill's experience in the hospital?
5. Could you identify with the feelings in this story?
6. How did Bill maintain his sobriety?

Some members start the program by going directly to Chapter 5, where the steps are outlined. By doing this, they miss the foundation and history of the fellowship. Later, many find it hard to continue with the step program. They tend to struggle until they learn the history and get a better understanding about the society to which they belong. The first forty three pages will help you understand and be able to do Step One.

The history described in the "*Forewords*", "*THE DOCTOR'S OPINION*" and "*BILL'S STORY*" will give you a good start.

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Now you have finished "**BILL'S STORY.**" Why don't you just sit back with a cup of coffee, read it again and enjoy it.....**LET BILL 12 STEP YOU!**

Make it a regular part of your sobriety to read Bill's Story on an ongoing basis. If you do this, it will take on new meaning as you grow in this spiritual program and gain a better understanding and knowledge of Alcoholics Anonymous.

As you appreciate the gift of sobriety, and as you experience this new way of life, you will be able to see, feel and believe as Bill did.

Bill received the following statement in a letter from a Henrietta Seiberling, who reviewed the first manuscript prior to the printing of the Big Book. He used this statement in some of his talks. And, like him, you can use it to humble yourself when you get the big "I" feeling by thinking you have done this all by yourself:

**"Alcoholics Anonymous is not, after all, a personal success story. It is, instead a story of our colossal human failure, now converted into that happiest kind of usefulness by that Divine alchemy, the living Grace of God."**

## 5.0 THERE IS A SOLUTION

***"We, of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, know thousands of men and women who were once just as hopeless as Bill. Nearly all have recovered. They have solved the drink problem."*** (The opening statement on page 17.)

Throughout this study you will read again and again about the recovered alcoholic. In time you will be able to claim the same. But first, there are certain things that need to be done. This chapter explains the solution to your alcoholism problem.

In this chapter you will find ample information to underline. Every paragraph contains a wealth of information for you to study.

### **CLOSE THIS STUDY GUIDE NOW AND READ THE FULL CHAPTER.**

Well now you have finished reading the full chapter. (You did read it didn't you, or did you cheat yourself and try taking a shortcut?) Okay, so you read it. Now it's up to you to study it.

**On page 17:** You find why the friendliness and fellowship exists amongst us, and the common solution is explained.

**Page 18:** Explains the illness as seen by the outsider and the damage it does.

#### **The last two paragraphs:**

Tell you how to approach a new person and the proper attitude to have when you do. Remember these points when you go on a call.

#### **Study all page 19 and to the end of the first full paragraph on page 20:**

The first paragraph states "**A much more important demonstration of our principles**". When we refer to the principles, they are considered to be the 12 Steps. Each principle has a virtue associated with it, these are shown in the appendix

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## [A.A. Principles and Virtues.](#)

(AA Principles page 75)

Here again you read about the "**recovered**" alcoholic. Notice how many times the word "**recovered**" is used.

### **Page 20 paragraph 1:**

Ending with the question "*What do I have to do?*"

The next paragraph is the answer: "***It is the purpose of this book to answer such questions specifically.***" In other words, we should be using this book as a textbook, and we will be shown how to get sober and recover.

**The bottom two paragraphs of page 20 that finish on page 21** have the descriptions of the 'Moderate drinker', the 'Hard drinker', and the 'Alcoholic'. A.A. understands that not all people who drink moderately or heavy are alcoholic.

"**But what about the real alcoholic?**" Here Bill describes the craving and lack of control that the alcoholic develops. This confirms the ideas presented in "**The Doctor's Opinion.**"

**Last paragraph on page 21, finishes on page 22,** gives a rough explanation of an alcoholic and the way they think.

1. Did this description fit you?

### **Study pages 22 and 23:**

The 'baffling' feature of alcoholism is explained, along with this disease and the hopelessness.

### **Read through to the end of the first paragraph on page 25.**

Get a good understanding of what you read so you can understand what is required in the steps which will follow.

Notice the first paragraph on page 24 is in italics. We note that these are used sparingly and only when Bill wished to emphasize a point.



### **GO BACK TO PAGE 17 IN THE BIG BOOK.**

Review what you studied up to page 25. Take your time. There is a lot of information and explanations for you to absorb. I don't think you would want to miss this.

Now you have finished the review, start studying from "***There is a solution.***" on page 25.

This paragraph explains your tool kit, which is made up of **spiritual tools**. The paragraph promises that with these tools you will be able to do things for yourself which you could never do before.

2. Do you understand or believe this promise?

Paragraph 2 starts with "***The great fact is just this, and nothing less.***" What follows is the solution. We have changed our entire outlook.

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The last paragraph explains *“we had but two alternatives:”*

- a) *“to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best we could;”*
- b) *“and the other, to accept spiritual help.”* You do this if you honestly want to and are willing to make the effort.

**Finish studying to the end of the chapter.**

The story which starts on page 26 is about the man, Roland, who had seen Dr. Carl Jung and then talked to Ebby whom in turn carried the message to Bill. If it was not for this man, you and I would not have A.A. today. It may just be worth reading again.

On page 27 in the third paragraph Dr. Jung tells Roland what is required for him to have a vital spiritual experience. ***“To me these occurrences are phenomena. They appear to be in the nature of huge emotional displacements and rearrangements. Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men and suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them.”***

**–change is the name of the game.**

You have finished studying this chapter and discovered that the solution is CHANGE.

That change is in a spiritual awakening which you get through doing the 12 steps.

You deserve a pat on the back, so just give yourself a pat by reading this chapter in full again.

Review any notes you have made and notice what you highlighted in the book.

After all that hard work, why don't you just shut the book, go have a coffee and tell your sponsor what you have done and be grateful. Let them know you have not quit yet.

**"KEEP AN OPEN MIND"**

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**We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.**

## **6.0 STEP ONE**

What is meant by the following statements?

**'admit that you were powerless over alcohol'**

**'admit that your life had become unmanageable'.**

This may sound like admitting you were weak willed and had no control over your life at any time; rather hard to swallow and very disturbing to think you may have reached this point.

Why would any sensible person want to do this Step? You thought you were able to handle your alcohol, how can you now admit you were powerless!

Had life really become unmanageable, or was it just bad breaks. This can't go on forever, it never does. Besides, you know other folks who have had similar things happen to them. Why do I have to do this step?

These thoughts and questions have gone through people's minds a thousand times. Those who decide all is okay, just continue. However, those who give it serious thought and decide to take this step and continue with the rest of the program usually get sober and recover. They go on to experience a way of life they had only dreamed about. They never thought it would be possible for them.

Take an honest look at your past. Do you want life to continue as it has been, or would you like a change?

**This is a serious question. It is about your life and only you can make this decision. It's your choice.**

If you are serious about giving this program a try, then you are ready to start. However, if you feel you do not have an alcohol problem and this would be an exercise in futility and not worth while, stop now and good luck in your future.

If you have decided to go ahead with the program, then open the book to chapter three, "**MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM**" on page 30. This chapter is about making the decision to change your life.

**READ THIS FULL CHAPTER BEFORE GOING ANY FURTHER IN THIS STUDY.**

**Now study the first paragraph.** It explains the reason why we balk at looking at ourselves and it puts the finger right on the problem. It states, "***The persistence of this illusion is astonishing.***" (Illusion in this context means untruth.)

Make a note on how you feel about what you have just studied?

**Study the second paragraph.**

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This explains what you have to do before you can even hope to start, ***"We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholic. This is the first step in recovery."***

1. Can you concede to your innermost self that you are alcoholic?

### Study the third paragraph.

This will probably help set your mind at ease as to what the definition of an alcoholic is: ***"We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking."*** Think this statement over carefully.

2. Have you ever planned not to drink or thought about controlling how much you were going to drink before you went to a party? If so, why would you do this?
3. Did you always have full control of your drinking?
4. Have you ever continued to drink when you should have been somewhere else or doing something else?
5. Have you ever lost control, then made excuses rather than admit you had blown it?
6. Have you ever had a "blackout"?
7. Do the above questions describe your drinking behaviors?

Do not fool yourself with your answers; only you know the truth.

### Read the third paragraph again.

### Now read the last paragraph on page 30. It ends on page 31.

This makes a very frank statement: ***"We are like men who have lost their legs: they never grow new ones. Neither does there appear to be any kind of treatment which will make alcoholics of our kind like other men."***

### Now study the first full paragraph on page 31.

8. When did you first think that you could be alcoholic?

Remember, if a person shows they are unable to control their drinking, then change and have control over the amount they drink, our hats should be off to them.

### The second paragraph on page 31 explains some of the many methods used by alcoholics to prove they could control their drinking.

9. Have you ever tried any of these?
10. How early in your drinking career was the first time you tried? Why did you try?

### Now look again at the last paragraph on page 31.

This tells how you can diagnose yourself if you still think you are in control of your intake.

11. Have you ever tried to prove you could handle alcohol or changed your drinking habits or places? If so, why did you do this?

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Now study the first paragraph on page 32.

12. Why do you think so few want to stop while there is still time to do so?

Study the story starting on page 32 and ends on top of page 33.

Review this story very carefully.

He knew he had a problem and decided to stop drinking until he had become successful in business. After he retired he started to drink again and was out of control in a short period of time. From what you have studied to this point, write out the reason this happened to him.

13. Have you ever felt if you quit drinking for a period of time, just maybe you could drink again with control?
14. What two or three things do you think this man was missing during his sobriety which may have helped him stay sober when he retired?

The first paragraph on page 33 contains some critical facts.

If you are planning to stop drinking, there MUST be no reservation of any kind, nor any lurking notion that someday you will be immune to alcohol.

***"Once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic" – this is a serious statement.***

Many people fool themselves with this and, it seems to the outside world, the alcoholic is the only person who gets well so they can go out and get sick again.

The next paragraph about young people issues a warning.

15. Did this warning cause you any problem? If so, what?

Study the last paragraph on page 33.

This explains that to be affected, the amount you drink or the length of time you have drank may vary with different people and also between men and women. This removes the myth that you have to drink large quantities for a long time to be an alcoholic.

Study this full paragraph again.

16. Write out your opinion of this paragraph and state if you believe it or not?

Now study the first two paragraphs of page 34, starting from, ***"As we look back,"*** and ending, ***"the necessity or wish."***

17. Write out your feelings about these two paragraphs. Do you agree or not? Make your notes and keep them. Put your true feelings down. (Now that you have finished arguing with the pencil, carry on.)
18. Describe the **baffling feature** of alcoholism?
19. Do you fit this description? (Give this answer serious thought; it will determine how you will approach the rest of the program.)

When ready, study the last paragraph on page 34 over to the end of the first paragraph on page 35.

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This will help you determine for yourself if you require this recovery program.

**Next is a story about Jim. Study this story and highlight the points of importance.** It ends in the top two lines on page 37.

This story explained the **mental state which precedes a relapse**, and the example with Jim is the result of not enlarging his spiritual life.

20. Why is it called a relapse in the Big Book and not a slip?

Read Jim's story again. Note the mental twists: how alcoholics fool themselves, how they justify, and how they blank out the past experiences so they can try **just one more time**, regardless of the insane reason or the excuses.

**Study the first three paragraphs on page 37.**

Make notes about what you have studied.

21. Do you identify with any part of these three paragraphs?

22. Do you recall ever experiencing this "**curious mental phenomenon**" discussed in the second paragraph?

23. Did you ever spend time trying to figure out what the consequences of drinking would be prior to starting?

24. Was your drinking deliberate or casual? What is the difference between '**deliberate**' and '**casual**'?

Read from the start of page 37 to the end of the jay-walker story, which ends with the second last paragraph on page 38. ("**It's strong language—but isn't it true?**")

Now study this story again. Can you find anything in there, which might by chance, apply to such a fine a person as yourself.

Read the next two paragraphs which will take you to "**Let us take another illustration**", on page 39.

Self-knowledge is not enough!! Please, do not be one of those who fail to get this program because you think you have all this self-knowledge and do not require anything else.

**(Remember what Bill said about self-knowledge in his story.)**

**Next study the story about Fred.** This story ends on page 43. Review it with care and use your note paper.

25. What does 'self-knowledge' do for you?

**Finish studying to the end of the chapter.**

Highlight all the information you feel is important and note the points with which you disagree. Keep these notes and see if they are answered by the time you finish Step Twelve.

26. Like Fred, had you ever fooled yourself when it came to planning or not planning a drink?

27. Did you use some of the same excuses he did?



## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**Note the WARNING in the last paragraph on page 43, then refer back to the "THE DOCTOR'S OPINION" for more detail.**

There are several stories you just read which demonstrate this statement.

28. Why would there be no mental defense? (Look up the answer if you can't remember what the doctor said.)
29. What was the Doctor's feeling about help from a Higher Power?

If you have completed Step One, as suggested in this study, then you have a good understanding of what it is about.

30. Can you now fully concede to your innermost self and be comfortable with Step One?
31. Do you feel you were powerless over alcohol and that your life had become unmanageable?



**GET A COFFEE, RELAX AND READ THIS CHAPTER AGAIN.**

Highlight anything you may have overlooked.

**Note the warning in the final paragraph.**

As a point of interest, I am including a paragraph from page 199 of the book **"Pass It On"**. This outlines Bill's sources and the intention of the first three steps.

***"Bill's first three steps were culled from his reading of James, the teachings of Sam Shoemaker, and those of the Oxford Group. The first step had to do with calamity and disaster; The second was an admission of defeat – that one could not go on living on the strength of one's own resources; and the third was an appeal to a Higher Power for help."***

**"FIRST THINGS FIRST"**

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could return us to sanity.**

## 7.0 STEP TWO

The chapter "**WE AGNOSTICS**", starting on page 44, should give you a good understanding of the type of 'faith' required to achieve and stay sober and be able to check the similarities with the faith you had in the past. Agnostic means: 'Without knowledge of God'.

This chapter will require a lot of concentration and study.

Before you start the study, write out what this Step means to you now, and how you understand and apply it in your life today. Keep this for later comparison.

**The first paragraph on page 44** explains the drinking experience of the alcoholic and states it is an illness and suggests "**only a spiritual experience will conquer**" this type of illness. This program is a spiritual recovery, not a medical recovery.

**Read and study the next two paragraphs.**

- There is a choice: **alcoholic death or a spiritual based life.**
- These are not easy alternatives to choose between. It is your choice.

Not only atheists or agnostics have trouble here. Many who were raised in religious or spiritual homes and became alcoholics might also fight the principle concept of this step.

It will be your **attitude** which helps or hinders your progress.

Turn to "**Spiritual Experience**" at the back of the book and read it. Does the statement by Herbert Spencer fit you at this time?

Throughout this program you will find spirituality in the steps.  
Some members confuse spiritual programs with religious programs.  
The following may help you see the difference between the two:

**SPIRITUAL PROGRAM:** one in which you choose and determine your own concept of a Higher Power or God, in whom you can believe. It is personally chosen, accepted and felt. It is not a written program; it is a believing program.

**RELIGIOUS PROGRAM:** one in which you are told who and what God is in accordance with the religious concepts and teachings of the Church. This is determined for you by the faith and the practice of a particular religion.

**Study from the bottom of page 44 through to the second paragraph on page 45.**

Many people have wished for a lot of different things, hoped for change and used all the will power they had. These were their human resources and therefore not sufficient.

1. Did you ever experience this?

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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The main objective of the Big Book is to allow you to find a Power greater than yourself which will help you solve your problem. A tall order, but worthwhile pursuing.

Carry on reading, lay aside any prejudice and biases you may have and try to keep an open mind. Your future depends on this.

**Study the first paragraph on page 46.**

The promise states, ***"as soon as we are able to lay aside prejudice and express even a willingness to believe in a Power greater than ourselves, we commenced to get results."*** You may not be able to define this Power, but it is there.

**Study the last paragraph on page 46.**

You will get an understanding of the simplicity of the last three paragraphs you have just read. Make notes. They will come in handy later.

2. Do you believe the promises you have just read?

**Read all of page 47 now!!!**

**In the first paragraph** is an understanding and a definition of ***"spiritual growth."*** It explains what can happen as long as you will keep an open mind about spirituality and spiritual growth.

Write out points to remember for future reference. If you have a problem with this, write out what the problem is before you continue further with the study of this chapter.

You choose your own concept of God, regardless of what others think. When you do this, you start to put in place a solid foundation on which to build strength, hope and direction.

3. What is required to start spiritual growth?

**Study the second paragraph on page 47.**

It asks an important question. What is your true answer to this question?

Note the promise: ***"It has been repeatedly proven among us that upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built"***.

Remember, this spiritual structure is you and your future. It's your life – so treat it good.

Meditate and find the meanings in this paragraph and see if you are comfortable with them.

**Now study the last paragraph on this page.**

You can start at the level of understanding you now have. You do not have to wait until you become knowledgeable. This will come as you grow spiritually in understanding and will continue for the rest of your life, if you want it to.

**Carefully study from the last line on page 47 to the end of the first paragraph on page 49, stopping at, *"Rather vain of us, wasn't it?"***

Write out any thoughts you had on this, paragraph by paragraph, where you agreed, and if you disagree write the reasons why.

4. Have **you** ever been handicapped by obstinacy, sensitiveness, or unreasoning prejudice? (Use your dictionary, it helps)

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**Study to the end of the last paragraph on page 50.**

This outlines some arguments used to justify our understandings and our thoughts prior to A.A. Then it tells of actions and feelings after accepting "a Power greater than yourself."

5. Do you believe what you just read?

**Study from where you left off, to the end of the first paragraph on page 53, ending with "We don't know."**

Do all the superstitions, traditions and fixed ideas of people in the early years before science seem foolish to you today?

6. Were you ever this narrow minded when it came to knowing about alcoholism and spirituality?

7. Many doubted the full Power of God before A.A. Do you?

**Study the second paragraph on page 53.**

8. After what you have read, and knowing how you feel now, what is your choice going to be? Write it out now.

**Now study to the end of the first full paragraph on page 55.**

This should give you an understanding about the kind of 'faith' you have had throughout your life, though you may have thought differently. Study this carefully and make notes.

**When you complete this and are comfortable with it, then study the rest of the chapter.**

9. Had you been fooling yourself about faith?
10. Can you accept this faith, which is deep within yourself, is the fundamental idea of God?
11. Have you ever called out for 'help' when there was no human being around to help you?
12. Why would you call for 'help' if you had no faith?
13. Was it because you felt within yourself there was something there which could help you?

Help will come if you ask for it. A Power will be disclosed, and you will have the strength to do things you always wanted to do.

This chapter should help you come to believe that a Power greater than yourself could restore you to sanity so you do not take the first drink.



**STOP!!**



**BEFORE YOU GO ANY FURTHER, READ THIS CHAPTER ONE MORE TIME.**

The basic information in this chapter will help you understand the spiritual concepts in the rest of the program.

Define your own understanding of the word '**sanity**' as you now understand it after studying this chapter. Do not use the dictionary to define it.

14. Has your definition changed from your previous definition?

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## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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All this step asks of you is to come to believe that a Power greater than yourself can restore you to sanity.

This may be the commonsense thing to do because, so far, you have admitted you were powerless over alcohol, had lost control when it came to drinking, and some areas of your life had reached a point where they were unmanageable. You wanted help to get on with the business of living, so you joined A.A.

This may be the sane thing to do. It has worked for other people who are alcoholic, and it will work for you – **if you want it.**

15. From your own life experiences and with what you have read so far, do you now have a better understanding why some of the things you tried had not worked as you had wished?

16. Are you now willing to try a new way with a Power greater than yourself?

Every person requires proper nourishment if they expect to get healthy and stay that way. The following gives an idea of how to obtain the three essential types of health.

**Spiritual health:** You receive this nourishment through an acceptance of a Power greater than yourself. Then you exercise this by communication with God through prayer and meditation, and by participating in discussions and trying to do His Will. Think positive.

**Mental health:** The nourishment required for good mental health is proper rest, mental stimulation, companionship and friendship. This comes through reading, communication and doing things together.

**Physical health:** Proper types of nourishment and exercise are required to give us physical strength and a healthy body.

Many of us found all three areas were undernourished when we arrived in A.A. By getting involved and staying involved in the program by going to meetings, practicing the Steps and becoming part of the fellowship, we were able to exercise and improve all areas of our health.

The Steps will start you on the road to recovery and give you the proper exercises to maintain a fit spiritual condition so that you are able to live a sober, healthier lifestyle.

**"THY WILL – NOT MINE"**

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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## 8.0 HOW IT WORKS

**"HOW IT WORKS" starts on page 58. Read through to page 60. Stop at, "We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection."**

You usually hear the first part of this chapter and the 12 Steps read at the start of many meetings.

In doing a careful study and you will understand the Steps are vital guides in your own spiritual progress towards recovery.

You claim **spiritual progress** rather than **spiritual perfection**.

Earlier in this series you read about people who were at several different stages of alcoholism. With some, their brains and body have not been as damaged as others have been. This being a fact, it is easier to understand what is meant in the first and following paragraphs of "**How It Works**".

Start again and study the first paragraph of this chapter:

**"Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path".**

If a person does not have mental deterioration, it is easier to thoroughly follow the path in the 12 Steps. It would be rare to see a person fail in this recovery program if they have all their mental abilities and were willing and able to accept the program.

**"Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. There are such unfortunates."**

Because of the damage some people have due to drinking, they find it more difficult to accept and understand what is required of them. It seems they cannot or will not completely accept this program. (As stated in Bill's Story on page 16.)

They seem incapable of being able to do it and experience great difficulties. They seem to be totally or constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. This reminds us that some people are more unfortunate than others when it comes to the amount of damage they have done to themselves.

**"They are not at fault; they seem to have been born that way. They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. Their chances are less than average."**

These people are not at fault and we should be prepared to recognize this. They may have been born like this. They have a very serious problem and find difficulty in being able to grasp or develop any sort of a plan or manner of living which requires them to be honest and then put it to work for themselves. As a result of this condition, it appears their chances are less than average for recovery.

**"There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest."**

Some people who come to A.A. have serious emotional and mental disorders. They may be receiving outside help. Because A.A. is not in the mental health field, the best we can do is encourage them to seriously try our way of life. Many of these people do recover if they have the

## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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mental capability to be honest with self. This is a spiritual program with many miracles, so don't give up on them. (Described in The Doctor's Opinion)

***"Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it – then you are ready to take certain steps."***

Bill's story and others on pages 26, 32, 35, 39 and 55 tell what it was like, what happened and what it was like now.

When you tell a newcomer your story, you do it in a **'general way'**. You cover feelings, thoughts and the hopelessness, along with some of the actions, thus enabling anyone who is alcoholic to identify. Remember, everyone may not identify with your type of drinking.

Speak of the rewards of sobriety. If newcomers want the rewards of sobriety described and are willing to go to any length to get it, then they are ready for the rest of the Steps.

If you have decided you do not want what is offered, or if you **are not willing** to put forth the effort to do the Steps, then this program will be most difficult for you.

**The next paragraph tells us some people have 'balked' at some of these Steps.** Some of us will resort to our old ways, the seemingly easier, softer way. You continue to decide what is good for yourself. But this will not work; you have to be as fearless and thorough as you can be from the very start if you want any success in this program.

***"Remember that we deal with alcohol – cunning, baffling, powerful!"***

Alcoholism is a cunning, baffling and powerful problem, with which you will need help. You are attempting to recover from a **"seemingly hopeless state of mind and body."** You cannot conquer it alone; you need the help you discovered in Step One and Two, which is **'God as you understand Him.'**

The **'cunning'** feature was described in **"The Doctor's Opinion"** the **'baffling'** feature was in **"More About Alcoholism"** and the **'powerful'** feature was described in **"We Agnostics"**

***"Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery."***

This means the first one hundred members of A.A. who helped write the book have outlined the Steps they took to recover. They don't say they just read them.

The entire 12 Steps are the suggested program of recovery. (Not a sobriety program.)

It does not say to pick and choose the ones you want to do and leave the rest; in fact, it states: ***"Half measures availed us nothing."***

**Following the 12 Steps is a description of how most react.**

Many look at this work and say I cannot do it. It is good to know that many members who have gone before you have felt the same, but they stuck with it and they recovered.

One hang up for some new members is they feel they have to do everything perfectly in A.A. Some are shy about asking how to do things. No person has ever come into this fellowship and done the program perfectly, nor is there anyone doing this program perfectly today. We all work for spiritual progress. No one claims spiritual perfection.

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Do the Steps to the best of your ability and be willing to grow along spiritual lines. You are not a saint and probably will not be for a while yet, so each day, just be the best you can.



# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.**

## 9.0 STEP THREE

In Step One you **admitted you became powerless over alcohol, and your life had become unmanageable**, then you decided to do something about it to try and improve your future.

The Step Two function was to **come to believe that a Power greater than yourself could restore you to sanity**. This should give you the hope and understanding that you will be able to function better in your everyday life from now on.

Remember, it was an admission of defeat – you could not go on living on the strength of your own resources.

**Self-honesty, admittance, acceptance, faith and conceding were the underlying principles in the first two steps.**

If you have been able, in Step One, to admit you had an alcohol problem and your life had become unmanageable, and if you were able to honestly believe that self was in need of help, and if you have started to believe a **'Power greater than yourself'** can help you, as discussed in Step Two, then you are ready to do Step Three, which is an appeal to a Higher Power for help.

There are several parts to this step, and you should have your dictionary handy before you start.

What is meant by "**made a decision**"?

This has two parts. To decide and to act. It is your own determination about what you will do, what action you will take. It is about 2% deciding and 98% action.

You make a decision to turn **'your will'** and **'your life'** over to the care of God, as you understand Him.

What is **'your WILL'** in this case? Could **'your WILL'** be your own convictions, your determination to do things your way, your will-power, and thus, your choices? Could it also be your desires and pleasures?

What is **'your LIFE'** in this case? Could this just be your very existence as an individual; your total being; your thoughts, actions and spirit; your past, present and future?

Look in your dictionary for the definitions of **DECISION** and **WILL**.

Now this may all seem a bit much for you, but before you stop or refuse to do this, answer these few questions.

1. What Power is in charge of your existence right now?
2. What Power just made your heartbeat?
3. Is this Power greater than you?

**Maybe it won't be such a hard decision or bad idea when you realize some Power greater than yourself has and will continue to give you life without any thought or effort on your part.**

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All this Step asks is for you to recognize and make a conscious decision to rely on this Power for a better life. You have to rely on it to stay alive, so why not just consciously team up and work together to develop a better way of life for your future.

If you are willing and you can accept this concept of a Power greater than yourself you will remove some of the biases and roadblocks which may slow you down in gaining the understanding and acceptance of Step Three.

This step asks you to **'make a decision to turn your will and life over to the care of God as you understand Him'**.

This causes some people a problem. They get this mixed up with religion. Then fear and denial take over. They may argue that this is not what they were taught as a child in Sunday school. Try not to get into this debate yourself, as most of it is caused by guilt and fear and does little to help you recover. Remember, you read and discussed this in Step Two, the Chapter to the Agnostic.

Read it again if you are having trouble accepting this.

In this program you choose a God of your own understanding today.

**Try not to get caught up in the yesterdays of your life.**

Step Three starts on page 60, with the paragraph ***"Our description of the alcoholic, the chapter to the agnostic, and our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:"***



**STOP!!**



**STOP NOW AND READ ALL OF STEP THREE FROM PAGE 60 TO THE LAST FULL PARAGRAPH ON PAGE 63.**

Now you are ready to study Step Three.

**Study the first paragraph on this Step in the Big Book page 60.**

This refers to:

- ✓ Chapter Three – ***"More about Alcoholism"*** (step one)
- ✓ Chapter Four – ***"We Agnostics"*** (step two)
- ✓ ***"and our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:***
  - (a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.***
  - (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.***
  - (c) That God could and would if He were sought."***

Note: The personal adventures were in Bill's Story, Roland and Dr. Jung, pages 26-27, the spree drinker, page 32, Jim, the salesman, page 35, Fred the accountant, page 39 and the minister's son on page 56.

The next paragraph starts with, **"BEING CONVINCED, WE WERE AT STEP THREE"**

For several years, the meaning of this statement confused me, until I got a copy of the original AA Big Book Manuscript which was sent for final review prior to printing. It read:

***"If you are not convinced on these vital issues, you ought to re-read the book to this point or else throw it away"***

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Then I understood the (a), (b) and (c) were about steps one and two.

Read the three pertinent ideas again. Look in the dictionary for the word "pertinent".

**Study the last two paragraphs on page 60 ending on page 61.**

The questions in the first paragraph are, ***"Just what do we mean by that, and just what do we do?"*** Study to the end of the last paragraph on page 60 for these answers.

1. Can you identify with the actor?
2. Have you ever tried to have things your own way?

Review that paragraph again.

**Study the first paragraph on page 61 which starts with the question, *"What usually happens?"***

3. Did you answer all the questions in this paragraph?
4. Did you identify?

Before going further, read those two paragraphs again, just for the fun of it! These two paragraphs describe in a general way how others see the alcoholic's actions, though the alcoholic may not recognize it. Underline what you found of interest.

**Study the last paragraph at the bottom of page 61 over to where it ends on 62. Answer the question at the end.**

**Study the next two paragraphs on page 62, stopping at *"We had to have God's help"*.**

You may have just read about yourself. Note the many forms of being negative such as: fear, self-centeredness, selfishness, self-delusion, self-pity. This is what you are turning over.

Use your dictionary to get an understanding of some of these words, and then answer the questions that follow.

5. Have you ever made decisions based on self which later put you in a position to be hurt? If so, write out some examples you remember. They may be used later in Step Four.

**It is important you reduce your self-centeredness. But you just can't wish it away or use will-power on it.**

**Carefully study the last paragraph on page 62 to find out how to reduce this self-centeredness.**

***"This is the how and why of it."*** In other words, this is how you do it and why you do it. Remember, you read at the start of the study that this book will show you **'precisely'** what to do.

Notice the two things you do to be rid of self-centeredness. Write these out and remember them.

Look in your dictionary; find the definition of **'keystone'**.

You are building a new and triumphant arch through which you pass to freedom.

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Never try to be the keystone in this archway. Leave that position for God as you understand him, and then your archway will become larger and stronger day by day.

Review this concept and the suggestion in this paragraph.

This is one of the very important actions you will face and take in these Steps. It will give you freedom, and then provide you with the opportunity to change your way of thinking and living.

**Study the first paragraph on page 63.**

This explains the results and promises you can expect to receive if you have sincerely taken the position described in the last paragraph on page 62.

When you have done this, you will be on good spiritual footing and you should begin to lose your fear of the future.

You are reborn into a new way of life.

If the word **'reborn'** bothers you because it sounds like a religious quote, compare it to the paragraph in **"The Doctor's Opinion"** where he stated, ***"In nearly all cases, their ideals must be grounded in a power greater than themselves, if they are to re-create their lives."***

6. Is there a difference between these two statements, reborn and re-create, or is the word **'re-create'** a medical term and the word **'reborn'** a spiritual term for the same thing?

**Study the second paragraph on page 63 which starts, "We were now at Step Three".**

Up to this point you have gained understanding and have been preparing for this action, so now it is time to do the step.

This prayer will help you to receive what you have worked for to this point by removing "self" and finding a new direction in your life.

Let's review this prayer.

***"God, I offer myself to Thee – to build with me and do with me as thou wilt?"***

7. Can you accept this as surrender, and now seriously ask for help to build your future?

***"Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will."***

8. Have you become a slave unto 'self' and would you like to receive help to try and find a way to do things better?

***"Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always."***

9. Are you admitting you have had problems and difficulties in life when you run the show yourself?

10. Are you saying you could do a better job of helping yourself and others if you had some assistance and direction on how to do this?

11. Are you now aware of how your own **'will'** may have been a bit of a handicap?

Hope you noticed this is between You and the God of your understanding; there is no we, us, or ours in this prayer.

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Write out this prayer or put it in your own words. It is a good starter for each new day and helps you get 'self' out of the way so you can grow spiritually.

**If you have trouble understanding what your will was or is, just turn back to page 61 and study the second paragraph again.**

12. What can you identify with, in this paragraph?
13. Do you want to keep those characteristics, or would you prefer the promises in the first paragraph on page 63?

The promises in the first paragraph on page 63 will come because of the prayer mentioned above. The negative characteristics mentioned on page 61 will be replaced. However, this all depends upon your willingness to live with your decision in this step.

Reading this prayer reveals things that may not have been apparent before. You made a decision and became open to having a power greater than yourself in your life. **Ask for relief from bondage of SELF, not from alcohol.**

Remember, we read **Selfishness-Self Centeredness was the root of our problem.**

**Study the last full paragraph on page 63.**

This explains you can use any words you want, so long as you **express the idea and voice it without any reservation.** Some take this with a minister or a family member. It is up to you, but it should be said aloud.

Remember, Step Three is an admission that you could not go on living on the strength of your own resources or convictions.

Step Three, when completed in a sincere manner, should start releasing you from your past if you have turned it all over to a **"Power greater than yourself."** You will be set free with God's help and the remaining Steps. To remain free, you will have to practice this program constantly.

The first three Steps demanded your admittance, acceptance, faith, and decision. These can be called the **'armchair'** Steps.

You have only made a decision to this point, and for this to become vital you **must** take action and that is in the next steps.



**STOP!!**



**GO HAVE A CUP OF COFFEE, TAKE A BREAK.**

Now that you have had a break, relax, and take the time to review all you have done since starting this study program.

Make notes about any changes in your thoughts or attitude.

In the early part of sobriety, there seems to be no way of removing or controlling any sudden urge, wish, temptation or thought about having a drink. This was explained in the **'Doctor's Opinion.'**

The only thing you will ever be able to control is the **'choice'**, to take a drink or not take a drink. This, of course, comes after you have had the thought, urge, wish or temptation about it.

Whenever you have to make this choice, you should use the help of a Power Greater than yourself to overcome this sudden urge, wish, thought or temptation.

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With God's help, and if you are willing, you will always be able to make the right choice, and therefore remain sober.

Do not get all worried or scared just because the thought of a drink has popped into your mind. You never know what type of a thought you will have, until you have it. It does not mean you are going to drink; it just means you now have the opportunity to once again make a decision and strengthen your commitment to sobriety and a better way of life. It will also give you the opportunity to check and see what may have caused this type of thinking to start when it did.

Keep your recovery through **faith** in your Higher Power, not through **fear** of alcohol.

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**

## 10.0 STEP FOUR

To get to Step Four, you have studied the Big Book from the front cover to page 63 and have completed the first three Steps.

By doing this you now have an understanding of:

- ✓ The History of the Fellowship,
- ✓ Who Bill Wilson, the co-founder of A.A., was,
- ✓ The Medical Opinion and definition of alcoholism,
- ✓ The Solution to your problem,
- ✓ Step One – (Big Book chapter three),
- ✓ Step Two – (Big Book chapter four),
- ✓ How this program works, and
- ✓ Step Three.

Once you have completed studying and doing the first three Steps, you will be well into the **'first phase'** of recovery, which is **'spiritual'**.

Be good to yourself and get all you deserve from this program.

Remember, it is your life, so only the best will be good enough.

***"There is a principle which is a bar against all information which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep man in everlasting ignorance—that principle is contempt prior to investigation"***

(Just included this in case you were thinking of balking. See appendix 2, Spiritual Experiences in the back of your book.)

### **SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE (Big Book Page 567)**

Always remember the A.A. program and the 12 steps were written by alcoholics who loved and understood you. **This is a SPIRITUAL PROGRAM; therefore it is meant to help you, not harm you.**

The most difficult part about any step in this program is your perception before trying to do it, what you think the results may be before you do it, plus the many confusing stories other members may tell you about the program.

Try to ignore negative stories. Work your own program to the best of your ability, but work it!

The only story in which you need to be interested is **your own**.

You have promised yourself in the beginning you would go to any lengths to get this program. Well, this is only another Step to help you pass through that archway to freedom on your path to recovery.

Step Four does not ask you to write out your life story, nor does it ask you to do a drinking history.

## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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This step shows you how to make a searching and fearless moral inventory of yourself. Doing a moral inventory will help you search out the flaws in your makeup which caused you to do things which may have been immoral or wrong.

You will find out why you had problems and where they started.

Have fun and do what the Big Book instructs you to do.

This will be a Moral Inventory and NOT the story of your drinking.

### THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME DEFINITIONS WHICH MAY HELP IN THIS STEP.

<b>SELF-ESTEEM:</b>	Belief in yourself. Self honor.
<b>SECURITY:</b>	Feeling secure or safe, protected, freedom. Has good friends, family or job security.
<b>SELFISH:</b>	Too much concern about yourself and little or no interest or concern about other people.
<b>SELF-SEEKING:</b>	Seeking only or mainly to further your own interest.
<b>SEARCHING:</b>	Looking for, investigate.
<b>FEARLESS, MORAL:</b>	Let's examine these two words as from Bill's mind. Bill wrote from a businessman viewpoint. So, for Bill ' <b>FEARLESS</b> ' meant without regret or emotion. ' <b>MORAL</b> ' would have meant truth.
<b>DICTIONARY:</b>	Look in your own and use it.

### ENOUGH OF THIS, LETS GET STARTED.

#### **"MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES"**

This calls for action on your part. Open the Big Book to page 63.

**Start reading from the last two lines on page 63 to the end of the second paragraph on page 64, which ends at "*common manifestations*".**

You will hear that there is no hurry to do the fourth step, so the question arises as to when you should start it. The Big Book tells you when to do it.

It states, "**Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action**". This does not say to sit around and think about it after you have finished the step three prayer.

These three paragraphs explain:

- ✓ what an inventory is,
- ✓ what you are about to do,
- ✓ and the reason and purpose for doing so.

You read – "**our liquor was but a symptom**" of the problem, so you search for the "**causes and conditions**" which had underlined your failures in life. These again are "**Selfishness – self centeredness**". This step will be a "**fact-finding and fact-facing process.**"



# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

The first paragraph on page 64 describes what an inventory is all about.

Following the directions in the Big Book you will make a **'searching and fearless moral inventory'**. Remember, it does not ask you to write your drinking history or life story. You are to take an honest moral inventory by first searching out the flaws in your makeup which caused failure in certain areas of your life.

There are four areas of your life on which the Big Book asks you to do an inventory.

These are identified in the Big Book as:

1. Manifestations of Self
2. Resentment
3. Fear
4. Sex

You will work through each area, one at a time, before moving on to the next.

## 10.1 SELF:

First, you will review the various ways in which 'self' has been manifested and then consider the common outcomes which caused you problems.

To do this review of **'self'** turn back to page 62 and review the second paragraph. Note all the different forms of 'self' you will consider. Self-delusion, self-seeking, self-pity, self-centeredness, selfish, self-will. Now, look in your own dictionary for other forms of 'self' which you will review.

Develop a good working understanding of these displays or exhibitions of 'self' so you can dig into your past and identify where and how these different forms of 'self' may have caused you some problems. Work toward the positives and try to eliminate the negative behaviors as you practice the program.

As you review the dictionary, list the negative forms of self on one side of a page, and the positive on the other.

As an example:

Negative	Positive
Selfish	Selfless

You will see what you have to give up (the negative definition) and replace with another behavior (the positive definition) to gain the desired result.

**There are several areas where self" should be reviewed such as;**

- Money: unpaid debts, fraud, cheating on taxes, theft etc.
- Criminal Offenses: theft, shoplifting, rolling someone, etc.
- Divorce: fulfilling your end of the agreement, alimony, etc.
- Business Relationships: fairness and honesty with your partner and those with whom you dealt.
- Domestic problems: at home, in other homes, family break ups, infidelity, arguments, etc.

Consider these in your inventory, as you may have to deal with them later in Step Nine.

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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Review each of the above areas with the questions about your **self-delusion, self-seeking, self-pity, self-centeredness, selfishness, and self-will**, plus the other forms of self.

When you have finished reviewing and have identified the areas in which the different forms of self affected you or others in the past, then you are off to a good start and ready for the next task in this Step.

With the next three tasks, review the list on self' to see if and where these may fit into your inventory as you go along.

Remember, you made the decision to turn your will and life over to God as you understand Him, so **all you are doing from now on is making a written inventory of what you have turned over.**

## 10.2 RESENTMENT

Read the third paragraph on page 64, starting with **"Resentment is the 'number one' offender"**, and read down to **"we asked ourselves why we were angry."**



Don't read any further, study these few lines again and review what they say. Resentment means to re-feel old feelings.

You have been not only been mentally and physically sick, but you have also been spiritually sick.

This paragraph outlines the sequence by which you recover. It indicates **SPIRITUAL** first, then **MENTAL** and then **PHYSICAL**. Always remember this order of recovery.

**Spiritual** You will have developed a God conscience by doing the first three steps and have a new outlook on life and stopped depending on yourself for everything.

**Mental** You have started to develop rational thinking. Tell yourself the truth even though you may not believe it, but deep down you know it as the truth. You start to feel sure about yourself. Start sharing. Stop denying the facts. Get a good positive mental attitude.

**Physical** You test these feelings. They are tangible. You will realize the 'football in the stomach' feeling is now slowly disappearing and you began to feel alive and good about yourself.

Notice how the Big Book deals with resentments by referring to **ANGER**. Anger is the seed of resentment.

**It was written this way, so you understand what you are looking for.** You have experienced anger more times than resentment. To understand what caused resentment, you have to first find out the cause of the anger.

Anger is a warning that something is wrong. Every person will experience the emotion or feeling of anger. How you handle it is what will make all the difference. This is what this part of Step Four is all about.

Remember, **ANGER** is just an emotion. When we let the emotion take over we become **ANGRY**. Anger always comes before resentment.

There is a sequence or growth of this emotion which starts with:

1. **Anger** and, if unchecked, we will become angry.

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# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

2. **Angry** and then if left we will become resentful
3. **Resentment** can lead to
4. **Hate**, and hate can lead to murder. If this emotion is directed inward, it can lead to **suicide**.

Each of these stages take many forms such as: self justified anger, blaming others and denial.

The Big Book asks you to first make a list of all the **people, then institutions, then principles** with whom you have been angry. See the following list. There will be others you will think of who are not on this list. Add them on.

### People with whom you may have been angry:

teachers	brother	mother
dentist	bus-drivers	friends
receptionists	clergy	peers
clerks	aunts	neighbors
doctors	taxi drivers	spouse
bartenders	employers	waitresses
nurses	uncles	co-workers
grandparents	in-laws	lawyers
bankers	cousins	father
sister	bosses	ushers
salesmen	police	partner

The following is only a partial list of institutions with which you may have been angry:

jails	schools	courts
churches	government	social services
marriage	A.A	healthcare

The third list to make are the principles which have upset you or made you angry. A few that may help you start are:

the golden rule	ten commandments	Love
religion	responsibility	Trust
equality	fairness	honesty

Now go back to the first list, the people with whom you have been angry. You will start writing what is required for this part of step four. Below is a Snapshot of the worksheet for this list. (Appendix 2)

If you use a scribbler, open it so both pages can be used. Put this part on the left-hand page and leave the right side open for the second part which follows later.

On page 64 the book suggests you '**ask yourself why you were angry.**'

**Note:** Read this guide down to 'Now you know what to do'.

**GET STARTED and DO IT!**

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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Start with one name. Write out what it was that made you angry at the person at that time. There may be many times you were angry at the same person for different causes. If so, list each cause separately.

No matter how stupid or small the reason may seem at this time, write out why you got angry at the time it happened.

**At this point in the inventory, you are only trying to identify the subject of your past anger and the reason you got angry at that time.**

The key is to 'think' and 'write the things' which made you feel or get angry at the time of each incident. This part of the inventory takes time and thought. Take the time required, be searching and fearless. Get all the angers you can recall for each name you wrote down, and then move to the next name.

**Do not go any further in this guide until you have completed this part of the inventory on the people, institutions, and principles with whom you may have been angry.**

Notice that in the Big Book and this example, the causes of your resentment or anger are stated in very few words. It gets right to the point. We need to be as definite as the example on page 65 of the Big Book.

Now you know what to do - **GET STARTED** - and do it.

Now you have finished listing all the angers you felt against each person, each institution and each principle that you wrote down.

**YOU HAVE MADE A GOOD START!!**



**STOP NOW AND HAVE A BREAK**

Well, time now for more reading..... you stopped at page 64 in the last few lines at the bottom of the page.

Start from ***"We asked ourselves why we were angry"*** and study to the start of the example on the next page.

Notice there are five questions for you to answer:

- Was it your:
1. **self-esteem**
  2. **security**
  3. **ambitions**
  4. **personal relations**
  5. **sex relations**

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Which had been **hurt, threatened, or interfered with?**

**These five questions are very important. They are the causes of your anger. Whenever one, or more, is interfered with by somebody or something you will always experience the emotion or feeling of anger.**

By understanding these **'five causes'**, you will learn how to control your reactions to them in the future.

Spend time on this and you will learn a lot about yourself by doing a close review with these questions.

**The following is a suggested way to do this:**

I found the best way to answer these questions and others further on was to role play. I would use my Imagination and talk to an imaginary person who has the identical problem and was the same age as me when this situation occurred.

This imaginary person would tell me the situation, and then they would ask me the questions. I would then answer them from the knowledge I have today; not from what I understood and knew at the time of the incident.

I found 20/20 hindsight was useful and could be used in a constructive manner. I could remove myself from the situation and give a sound, clear and objective answer to each question. You may have to practice this a bit, but most of us have talked to ourselves in the past, so this should not be too hard. Others who have used this method found they were able to be objective and it was less emotional. We like giving advice, so here is your chance. Advise yourself and grow from your own knowledge.

This "header A", will be joined onto "header B" which is a few pages forward. (Appendix 1 or link below)

[\(Header A worksheet\)](#)

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">Write in the name of the person. The example in the Big Book is Mr. Brown</div> <div style="text-align: center; color: green; font-size: 2em;">↓</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">Write out what it was that made you angry at the person at that time.</div> <div style="text-align: center; color: green; font-size: 2em;">↓</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">Which had been interfered with, threatened, or hurt? Check 1 or more that apply.</div> <div style="text-align: center; color: green; font-size: 2em;">↓</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">When you have all your fears (<a href="#">FEARS PG43</a>) written out, return and complete this column. Select 0-4 depending on impact.</div> <div style="text-align: center; color: green; font-size: 2em;">↓</div>
I'm resentful at:	The cause of my anger:	Affects my:	Fear Factor 0-4
		1. Self Esteem 2. Security 3. Ambitions 4. Personal Relations 5. Sex Relations	
		1	2
		3	4
		5	

## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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Go back to your lists and fill in the area on the right-hand column of your chart under **"Affects my"**.

**NOW GO TO WORK.** Complete the above inventory work sheets before you go any further in this guide.

Now you have finished having your fun with this part of this easy exercise, why not just try these few questions:

1. Can you now see how you had been controlled by these feelings of anger?
2. Did you realize this was happening to you before?
3. Was it easier to blame others because you thought they had made you angry?

It is important to recognize these **'five causes of anger'** and how they affected your reactions in the past and may be still affecting you.

The next time you feel angry, quickly review the **'five causes of anger'** to see which one or ones were affected. You can learn to handle this emotion. You know what causes it, so now you can start to control it. Write these five causes of anger on a card and refer to it when you feel anger.

Remember, you don't have to be a hothead, unless you choose to be. Only you can do something about it. Stop blaming others.

Now that you understand what causes anger, it has now become your choice as to how you will react. You can, from now on, determine the type of emotional sobriety you will have in the future.

At the bottom of page 65 it reads, **"We went back through our lives. Nothing counted but thoroughness and honesty."**

If you have been thorough and honest, you have done a lot of work. Once you have completed this little part, it is time for more study.

**Open the Big Book to page 65.** Start studying from where you left off and stop on page 66 at the end of the second paragraph which ends with: **"but for alcoholics these things are poison."**



**STOP!!**



**Study this very carefully again.**

This explains what happened and what your reactions were in the past. With your new outlook on life, you should now understand why you did the things you did and reacted the way you did. At that time, it seemed like the natural thing to do, but now you will be able to correct these problems - **IF YOU WANT TO.**

This is your inventory; get a good understanding why you are doing each part of it.

Notice in the first paragraph it was stated:

**"The first thing apparent was that this world and its people were often quite wrong".**

Now study the last paragraph on page 66.

It stated, **"We began to see that the world and its people really dominated us".**

4. Can you see the deference and agree with these two statements?
5. How many promises did you find on page 66 and page 67?

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# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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Study to the bottom of the first paragraph on page 67, which ends, "*view of each and every one*".

By reviewing these paragraphs, you will comprehend how to handle your feelings toward a person who has wronged you.

[Do the Step 4 Forgiveness Prayer.](#)



## TIME FOR A COFFEE BREAK

For the next part of the inventory, you will need to concentrate and work steady for a couple hours. Make sure you have the proper amount of time, a fresh cup of coffee, and a good attitude and get started.

With the Big Book in hand, opened at page 67, and the lists you have completed to this point, you are now ready and willing to have an honest look at yourself and sincerely review your past.

**Read the second paragraph on page 67, which starts, "*Referring to our list again.*"**

Always remember, God did not make junk; you were not bad. You may have been mixed up and reacted in a strange manner which, at times, even you did not understand. We have all made mistakes in the past. This is your chance to understand them and be able to remove the burden it has caused you.

This is your own inventory, so disregard any other person involved. This exercise may cause you some pain in recalling the past. Just remember you are looking for your own problems. We try to disregard the other person involved entirely.

### NOW YOU WILL REVEAL THESE REASONS TO YOURSELF.

#### NOTICE THE FIVE QUESTIONS WHICH ARE ASKED IN THE BIG BOOK

Where had I been:	SELFISH? DISHONEST? SELF-SEEKING? FRIGHTENED?
Where was I	to BLAME?

Use the following 'Header B' for the above questions and attach it to 'Header A' containing; "*I'm resentful at: The Cause Affects my:*" (Make sure you put it on the right-hand page of your scribbler so they are in line.)

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

([Header B worksheet](#)) (Appendix 1 or link)

This is your own inventory, so disregard any other person involved. This exercise may cause you some pain in recalling the past. Just remember you are looking for your own problems. We tried to disregard the other person involved entirely.

(



Where had I been				Where was I
Selfish?	Dishonest?	Self-Seeking?	Frightened?	To Blame?

Remember, it may be easier if you role play these questions as you did with the first part. The answers will be easier to write out if you do. A lot of time in our early childhood we were blamed; this does not mean we were to blame.

This is a **searching and fearless moral inventory**. Don't cheat yourself by being lazy or thinking this is not important today.

Remember, it is the **yesterdays** you are dealing with at this time, but they affect your tomorrows if left unchecked.

**NOTHING TO THIS, RIGHT?**

**SO GET STARTED ON IT NOW.**



Do not go any further in this guide until you have finished the above work. Do your best.

You have reviewed many people, institutions, and principles which you have been angry with in the past. You may even have resented or hated some of them. Now you know why, and what caused you to feel the way you did. You also know how and where you fit in.

This may have been a little difficult to do, but be assured it was worth it. Remember you have turned your 'will and life' over to 'a God of your understanding' in Step Three, so all you were really doing was making an inventory or list of what you had turned over.

6. Was any of it worth holding onto or is it best to get rid of it?

**Well, I imagine you have found out a lot about your own past feelings and reactions, and with an honest attitude you have identified where you fit into these.**



## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**Sit back and relax**, take the Big Book, open it to page 63 and start from the last two lines and read through to the end of the second paragraph on page 67 and stop.

I know you have done your very best, and never had any thought of cheating yourself nor thought of blaming someone else for your problems when you filled in the charts. Am I right about that?

When you think someone '**causes the emotion of anger**' in the future, you do not have to be just a '**puppet on a string**' controlled by them. You will learn how to take control of your own emotions and begin to gain the freedom mentioned in Step Three.

**Remember, anyone or anything that can make and keep you angry, is smarter, bigger and more powerful than you because it has taken control over your mind. It has you under its control. You do not have to be a puppet on a string, controlled by someone or something else, unless you want it that way. You now have the choice.**

With this completed, it's time for a Coffee. Go have a few laughs.

**YOU ARE OFF TO A GOOD START, CONGRATULATIONS**

To help you get rid resentments, read [Freedom from bondage in the PERSONAL STORIES](#)

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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## 10.3 FEARS

Your next task: Review and understand your FEARS

Take the Big Book and read from the last paragraph on page 67 to the end of the first full paragraph on page 68.

This asks you to make a list of all the fears you have had or felt, and review them.

Using your dictionary, define the word 'fear' and identify its many forms and characteristics.

There are two types of fear: **Realistic** and **Unrealistic**.

**Realistic fears:** are identified easily; they are things like fire, injury, earthquakes, or a car accident about to happen, knowing you will get hurt.

**Unrealistic fears:** are in your mind, based on many of your past experiences and assumptions, and according to how your self-esteem, ambitions, security and relationships were at the time. Imagination and fantasy play a big part in this type of fear.

The following is a partial list of some fears you may have experienced. You may be able to add more to the list. The fear factor column from the resentments work sheet (HEADER A) provides a rating of 0-4, to help determine this impact. Return to this worksheet and complete the Fear Factor.

### FEAR OF:

being left alone	the dark
failure	rejection
interviews	teachers
businessmen	criticism
bosses	being known
fast drivers	spouse
tomorrow	the unknown
children	animals, birds
strangers	in-laws
crowds	not understanding
institutions	not been understood
being found out	not fitting in
death	acceptance
your emotions	saying the wrong thing
silence	success

There will be other experiences, feelings and thoughts which caused you fear, add them to the list. Many of these experiences, feelings and thoughts can, and have, restricted your spiritual growth.

A statement you often hear, '**fear replaces faith and faith replaces fear**'. You will see how this has been true in your life.

It is important to write out all your fears so you can deal with each one separately.

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**STOP!!**



## **STOP AND MAKE YOUR FULL LIST NOW.**

Before you go on, review the list you completed on 'anger' and note where you had felt or experienced fear. Combine them with what you have just done to complete this list on fears.

When you have all your fears written out, refer to your first list (resentments) and consider how fear motivated any of the five causes. Now re-read the first two paragraphs you reviewed on fear, pages 67 and 68.

Define the words: **self-reliance** and **failed**.

Now that you have listed all the fears you can recall, ask yourself the following two questions after each fear you have listed and write out your answer.

- 1. Why did I have this fear or form of fear?**
- 2. Was it because my self-reliance failed me?**

Once you have completed the above task, read and study the remaining two paragraphs on page 68, which end with the promise, "***At once, we commence to outgrow fear.***"

Did you notice the promises at the end of each paragraph you just read, and what you have to do to receive them? There are many promises in the Big Book. You should be able to find each one as you study. Are you keeping a list?

Spiritual growth will have started, as promised in the Big Book, if you have been honest and thorough to this point.



**STOP!!**



## **Take time to think about Steps Two and Three.**

Sit back and meditate on how you may apply these Steps in your life since you have revealed so much of your past to yourself.

1. Do Step Two and Step Three now have a different meaning to you?

**In Step Three you 'turned your will and life over to the care of God as you understand Him.'**

2. Do you realize how much you have turned over?
3. Think about the spiritual aspect to this program; write out what it means to you now?
4. Has this meaning changed since you started this study?

Make notes about any changes you can identify in your attitude or understanding now, as compared to before you started this step.

Learn to use fear to your advantage. Do this by using the skills of challenge and investigation with the new courage you have found. Remember you are never alone.

The following may describe your old way to handle some of your fears and the new way you will deal with them in the future.

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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## Your Old Way

False Evidence Appearing Real and Forget Everything And Run.

## Your New Way

Face Everything And Recover, with God's help and your faith.

It is the unrealistic fears we have had the most problem with in the past and will have to learn to overcome in the future.

5. How many of your listed fears were unrealistic?

Remember, **fear is always in your future, never in your past.**

If you will remember this, it will be much easier to deal with fear on a day-to-day basis. Faith and trust in your Higher Power are keys to helping you overcome fear and gain freedom. Fear is a coward when confronted in the proper manner.

Faith and trust may not make you fearless, but they help you to fear less. It is okay for you to have fear as long as you do not let fear have you.



**STOP!!**



**STOP AGAIN, GO HAVE A COFFEE**

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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## 10.4 SEX

This part reviews your sexual attitude and behavior.

Time for more fearless searching. Carefully study from the last paragraph on page 68 to the end of the first paragraph on page 69, stopping at, "***What can we do about them?***"

Notice, there are many opinions, ideas and values placed on this area of your life, which may have been caused through some ignorance and misunderstanding. This was made clear in what you have just read, so read it again. Try to understand what it means. Do not get into controversy or argument over this. The problem is yours.

This exercise will help you work out and understand what has happened in the past, so you can develop a plan of action to handle any sex problems which you will face in the future.

To do this, study the second and third paragraphs on page 69, to, "***be despised or loathed.***"

There are TEN QUESTIONS in this part, write out the answers as honestly as you can.

There are two sex inventory worksheets, HEADER A and HEADER B, located in the appendix of this guide.

Answer all the questions for each past conduct, in which you were or are involved.

[Sex Header A Worksheet](#) (Appendix 1)

[Sex Header B Worksheet](#) (Appendix 1)

In this area of life most people experience problems, guilt, confusion and distorted values, but would not or could not admit them honestly to their innermost self or others.

You can find where your value system, morals and ethics have been developed and learn how to change them if they are causing you problems today.

Answer each conduct or action in sequence. Role play these answers like you did with the first list dealing with anger.

Take your time and do a thorough review of each conduct or action which you write down.

Don't shortchange yourself, go back through your life, and be thorough and honest.

The book states, "***We all have sex problems. We'd hardly be human if we didn't.***"

**NOW COMPLETE THE ABOVE CHARTS AND LEARN MORE ABOUT YOURSELF.**

### "SEARCH AND YOU WILL FIND"

When you have completed the work, study to the end of page 69.

**Study and review these last two paragraphs in detail.**

- ☛ Define and write out your own ideal.

Our sex powers are God Given. Note the four good points and the warnings. There is a lot of willingness required on your part if you want to change.

Heed the meditation and prayers and the qualified answer in last paragraph on page 69. "***In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter***".

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# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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(Notice, the right answer will come, if you want it.)

On page 70 in paragraph 2 "***We earnestly pray***

- a) ***for the right ideal,***
- b) ***for guidance in each questionable situation,***
- c) ***for sanity, and***
- d) ***for strength to do the right thing".***

**Finish reading pages 70 and 71.**

Meditation on what you have just read and review your chart.

**Now study what it tells you about this step on pages 70 and 71.**

It starts in the third full paragraph, page 70.

A few questions about all parts of Step Four.

1. Did you do the best you could at this time?
2. Did you remain as honest as you could?
3. Did you leave out anything intentionally?
4. Did you find out you were mainly just mixed-up?
5. Do you have a better understanding of yourself now?
6. Do you now understand why you did things which may have caused confusion in the past?
7. Do you want to add anything from your past to what you have already written before you carry on with the rest of the program?
8. Did you have a lot of fun doing this step or did you think it would have been easier to be a quitter?
9. Do you find that this moral inventory has helped you to better understand some of the immoral activities and thoughts from your past?
10. You are really not such a bad person after all, are you? Well, now you have completed Step Four. It wasn't so bad, was it?
11. Time sure goes fast when you are having fun. Right?

Bill summarizes our process in the last two paragraphs of this chapter on pages 70 and 71.

**Keep your full Step Four Inventory for the Steps which follow.** You will need it to complete Steps five, six, seven, eight and nine.

**DO NOT THROW YOUR STEP FOUR AWAY OR DESTROY IT YET.**

Once you have finished this FOURTH STEP inventory you will have:

- ✓ Identified the exact nature of your wrongs for STEP FIVE.
- ✓ Identified the defects of character for STEP SIX.
- ✓ Identified what you want God to remove in STEP SEVEN.
- ✓ The list of most people you harmed, for STEP EIGHT.
- ✓ An inventory which you can review to classify the type of amends, the reason and the person to whom you will make it, for STEP NINE.

**KEEP YOUR STEP FOUR UNTIL STEP NINE IS COMPLETED.**

**"KNOW THY SELF"**

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# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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## Step 4 Forgiveness Prayer

From the bottom of page 66 ***“This was our course”*** through to the end of the first paragraph on page 67 ***“each and every one.”***

We ASKED GOD to help us SHOW them the same:

1. **Tolerance** – We put up with their behavior even when we don't like it.
2. **Pity** – a tender or sometimes slightly contemptuous sorrow or empathy.
3. **Patience** – endurance under difficult circumstances, which can mean persevering in the face of delay or provocation without acting on annoyance/anger in a negative way.
4. **Cheerfully** – having a happy disposition; in good spirits; it means we need a positive attitude.
5. **Friend** – We give friends forgiveness & grace.
6. **Helpful** – being of use or service to God.
7. **God save me from being Angry** – one's psychological interpretation of having been offended, wronged or denied and a tendency to undo that by retaliation.
8. **Thy will be done** – We agree to do the will of God, no matter the consequence to our Ego.
9. **Retaliation** – to take revenge with a harmful action against a person or group in response to a grievance, be it real or perceived.
10. **Argument** – an oral disagreement; verbal opposition; contention; altercation.
11. **Kindly** – a sympathetic attitude toward others, and a willingness to do good
12. **Tolerant View** – To be tolerant or patient in the face of provocation. Marked by forbearance or endurance. To view them as sick, not as bad and to try to see them as God sees them, with compassion.

## Big Book Page 552 Resentment

***“He said, in effect: “If you have a resentment you want to be free of, if you will pray for the person or the thing that you resent, you will be free. If you will ask in prayer for everything you want for yourself to be given to them, you will be free. Ask for their health, their prosperity, their happiness, and you will be free. Even when you don't really want it for them and your prayers are only words and you don't mean it, go ahead and do it anyway. Do it every day for two weeks, and you will find you have come to mean it and want it for them, and you will realize the where you used to feel bitterness and resentment and hatred, you now feel compassionate understanding and love.” It worked for me then, and it has worked for me many times since, and it will work for me every time I am willing to work it. Some times I have to ask first for willingness, but it to always comes. And because it works for me, it will work for all of us. As another great man says, “The only real freedom a human being can ever know is doing what you ought to do because you want to do it.” This great experience that released me from the bondage of hatred and replaced it with love is really just another affirmation of the truth I know: I get everything I need in Alcoholics Anonymous -and everything I need I get. And when I get what I need, I invariably find that it was just what I wanted all the time.”***

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**

## 11.0 STEP FIVE

Chapter 6, "**INTO ACTION**", is the starting point of Step Five, which ends with the second full paragraph on page 75. Before you start to read these pages, write out the reasons you think this Step should be done, what hang-ups you have with it, and if you think it is really necessary.

Now study the first paragraph on page 72.

This is just a quick review of the last two Steps, and what you will do in step five. What are the obstacles in your path? Looking at your fourth step, you discover that your defects are what stand between yourself and God.

Now study to the end of page 72.

1. Do you agree with what you've just read, or did you feel your own self appraisal was good enough?

Notice the reason for doing this Step, on page 72, and the explanation on page 73 in the first paragraph. Keeping things to yourself is what has caused problems in the past, so why not just do the Step and get on with the business of living.

If you refuse to do this Step, you may find yourself turning to easier, softer ways, and not staying sober.

Now finish studying to the end of the first paragraph on page 73.

Some people have felt they were able to do the rest of the program and skip this vital step. Later they find themselves in a dangerous position in their sobriety. They were still carrying around their past, and this interfered with the future – just like it always had.

Step Five is an extension of Step Four. You have identified the problems and now it is time for you to discuss them with someone else. Don't make a big deal out of it; just do it!

The exercise of identifying your fears, egoism and honesty may have made you feel humble, but it was all within yourself and therefore good to understand and start to deal with.

Now is the time to get 'self' out of the way, and show all your fearlessness, humility, and honesty in an open and sincere way.

Start preparing to tell someone ALL your story by studying the first paragraph on page 73.

2. Was this like you? Did you lead a double life?
3. Did you suffer from lack of a decent reputation?

Now study the second paragraph on page 73.

4. Did your sprees cause you some shame?
5. Did you do things you hoped no one observed?
6. Did you try to blot out bad memories?
7. Were you under fear and tension at times?
8. Did this cause you to drink when things got too bad?

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## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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Okay, now study the third paragraph on page 73.

9. Did you always tell your doctor the truth?

Read from the last line on page 73 to the end of the paragraph on page 74. This starts out with, ***“We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world.”***

This is just another good reason for doing the step.

Honesty brings happiness and trust, but the opposite if you are dishonest.

This paragraph explains how you select the person with whom you do Step Five. Today there are plenty of people with whom you can do a step five. When this was written there were only one hundred members of A.A. and few outsiders knew about A.A.

If it is to be clergy, they will be quick to understand what you are trying to do. Part of their job is dealing with other peoples' moral issues and giving good spiritual guidance.

Now read the first paragraph on page 74.

This explains how to select someone who is not clergy to hear your Fifth Step.

There is a warning if you choose to have a member of your family hear your Step Five. Remember, **you don't save your skin at the expense of someone else.**

Don't forget; you are trying to change your ways, not theirs.

Study the last paragraph on page 74.

This paragraph explains what you should do if you are in an area where there is no person available to hear you. There are few areas where this would apply today. It was a concern when the book was written.

It also outlines the type of person you should seek out for this part of the program.

Read the first paragraph on page 75.

Before you do this Step with another human being, you may first want to discuss the importance of this Step with them if they are not familiar with its purpose and reason.

Step Five has three parts. First, review your Step four and make a list of the **'exact nature of your wrongs.'**

What is meant by the exact nature of your wrongs?

The exact nature can also be stated as the "character, disposition or personality" of the wrong. This may help you better understand what is meant by the exact nature of the wrong.

In Step Four you wrote a **MORAL** inventory of yourself, not an **IMMORAL** story. You've dealt mainly with your feelings and thoughts at the time of each incident, which may have led to some physical, verbal or emotional reaction at that time.

It is all these feelings, thoughts and internal reactions you have experienced which will be the base of your discussion in Step Five about **"the exact nature"** of the wrong.

They are the **"causes and conditions"** you worked on in Step Four.

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Look at the headings on the charts for Resentment and Sex.

These will outline some of the 'exact natures of the wrongs'. Example: selfishness, self-centeredness, dishonesty, and gossip or stories which may have caused bitterness, jealousy, or suspicion. There is also fear, self-seeking, and inconsideration, plus examples of the way you were living and the lack of respect for self and others.

## **Suggestions for Step Five;**

This is a list of some 'defects of character', 'the exact nature of our wrongs' or 'short comings' that you may want to think about when you do your first two parts of the fifth step. You may want to roll them in with the others you have when you talk with another person.

- Dishonesty
- Intentionally lying to yourself and others.
- Selfishness
- Self-centeredness
- Self-seeking
- Excuses
- Denial
- Fears and angers
- Resentments
- Being bull headed, and relying on yourself
- Justification of your actions
- Blaming others
- Intentionally arousing jealousy, suspicion, bitterness
- Being inconsiderate
- Not caring who or how you hurt others
- Egotism
- Lack of humility
- Living on your reputation
- Shame
- Resisting change
- Power and control over others

By past practice of the above, what twists of character did you develop and practice?

Most of your wrong actions were due to some of the above.

**Remember, it is your inside you are trying to clean up; you are not trying to put a shine on your outside.**

Be searching and fearless. You have God on your side.

**So, when ready, you will 'admit the exact nature of the wrongs', in three different stages.**

### **First: You will admit to God**

Tell God what you discovered in Step Four, tell Him all about you. He already knows so don't be shy. When you are finished, ask for the strength, courage, and willingness to complete the rest of this Step and program.

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**GOD GRANT ME** the

**SERENITY TO ACCEPT** the things I cannot change,

**COURAGE TO CHANGE** the things I can, and

**WISDOM TO KNOW** the difference.

## **Second: You will admit to yourself**

Yes, you have written it all out, and thought it all through, so now sit in a quiet place and concede to your innermost self everything which you have discovered and disclosed in the Fourth Step Inventory. The weaknesses you have are a part of you; they will be turned into strengths with Gods help, by humbling yourself.

## **Third: You will admit to another human being:**

Go to the person you have chosen, tell them about the 'exact nature of your wrongs' which you have reviewed in the first and second part of this Step. Illuminate all the dark secrets you have kept from other people and may have even tried to hide from yourself.

**You prove to God and your inner-most self you are serious when you tell another person about the exact nature of your wrongs.**

It may have been easy to tell yourself and God, but the proof of your humility, honesty and sincerity is when you tell another human being the truth about yourself, withholding nothing.

Now study the second paragraph on page 75.

It starts at "***We pocket our pride and go to it,***" and ends with "***Spirit of the Universe.***" Let's just quickly review the first few lines of this paragraph.

***"We pocket our pride and go at it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past."***

The statement "***every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past***" does not mean we were emotionally, or mentally twisted people, so don't go and start looking for the immoral actions of your past. Try and see the larger picture in this statement and look for the positive meaning, the causes and conditions. In Step Five it is the exact nature of your wrongs which were outlined in your inventory headings.

There are six or seven promises in this part. You deserve everyone. Write them out.

Remember in Step Four it promised, "***we commence to outgrow fear.***"

Here it promises, "***our fears fall from us.***"

Spiritual beliefs will turn into spiritual experiences. You may experience a sense of euphoria and feel like the drink problem has disappeared. You are on a brand-new footing. The 'archway to freedom' which was discussed in Step Three will start growing larger and stronger. When you have finished this step, get ready for steps six and seven.

**OKAY, it is time for you to do Step Five. Go get it done.**

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.**

## 12.0 STEP SIX

This is to be done immediately after step five. Note the last paragraph on page 75.

A 'Defect' is explained in the Thesaurus as a:

- blemish, fault, flaw, imperfection, weakness, frailty etc.

Preparation for this Step starts in the last paragraph on page 75. Take the book, find a quiet place, and follow the outline.

Thank God from the bottom of your heart you now know Him better than before you did Step Five.

Turn to page 59 in the Big Book and carefully read the first five Steps.

After reviewing each of the first five Steps ask yourself:

1. Have I omitted anything in these Steps?
2. Is my work on these Steps solid?
3. Have I put all I could remember in place so far?
4. Have I skimmed on information I revealed in these Steps?
5. Have I done the best I could and not cheated myself?

Remember, you are building ***“an arch through which you will walk a free man at last”*** Make sure the foundation is solid.

If you are satisfied that you have done the best you can, then you are ready for Step six. This will take willingness.

6. Are you now ready and willing to let God remove all the objectionable things you have admitted?
7. Do you want to Him to take them all – every one?

If you are hanging onto something, ask God to help you be willing to let go of it.

When you are willing to have God remove **ALL** of your defects of character, and you feel at peace and are satisfied with this decision, then you have done Step Six.

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.**

## **13.0 STEP SEVEN**

A 'Shortcoming' is explained in the Thesaurus as a:

- -failing, fault, foible, imperfection, weakness, defect.

You have just become ready, in Step Six, to have God remove all the things you admitted were objectionable that you talked about during your Step Five.

Open the Big Book to page 76 and read the second paragraph.

This is similar to the prayer in Step Three, where you turn your will and life over to the care of God as you understand Him.

You do the same here, by asking God to take **ALL** of you, the good and the bad. Recognize that you alone cannot remove all the obstacles which stand in your way of being useful to God and your fellow man. Ask God to remove these problems, so you can get on with a useful, good life with the strength to do His bidding or His will.

When you are ready to have God remove **ALL** your defects of character, then read this prayer out loud:

***"My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen."***

Notice again there was no we, them, us or others in this prayer. It is between you and the God of your understanding. This is now your program.

Step Seven completes the personal part of the program. From now on we will be working with the public.

### **CONGRATULATIONS**

You asked to be useful to God and your fellow man. The remaining Steps will show you just how this is to be done.

Before you go any further, review of the first seven Steps. Remember to use Step Seven when problems arise. Ask God to remove them and then get on with the business of living the way you would think He would have you live.

**"HE CAN, AND HE WILL"**

**So**

**"LET GO - LET GOD"**

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.**

## **14.0 STEP EIGHT**

This Step begins with the third paragraph on page 76. Study this paragraph very carefully.

It may seem like a short explanation for such an important Step, so let's review this statement, piece by piece.

***"Now we need more action, without which we find that "Faith without works is dead."***

This tells you to stay active. It is the only way to carry on with the faith you have built to this point. Faith alone is not enough, in fact, it is dead if you do not or will not continue to demonstrate it in the way outlined in the rest of the Steps.

***"Let's look at Steps Eight and Nine"***

You may have questioned how and where you would demonstrate your faith, where would you do the work. Some of it will be done in Steps Eight and Nine as you reach out to 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. We subjected ourselves to drastic self-appraisal."***

By keeping your Step Four, you have the list of the people to whom you owe amends. You have worked from this list in Steps Five, Six and Seven. With these you have made a very critical and drastic self-appraisal. You know the problems and have accepted where you were at fault.

You may find a few more people to put on this list who were not in your Step Four. If so, put them on your Step Eight list now.

***"Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past"***

This heading is the definition of an "amend" Remember it states to repair the damage, it does not say to apologize!

You have started on your way to a new lifestyle. Having completed the first Seven Steps, you should now understand the full importance of being willing to clean up the past, which you turned over to God, so you continue to experience spiritual growth and start to fit into your own community again.

You will attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of your effort to live on self-will and run the show yourself.

You are willing to make the effort required to clean up and straighten out problems caused by living the way you had in the past, propelled by self-will and wanting your own way. You will make a sincere attempt to do this. Having done Steps Four, Five, Six and Seven you should have no fear of doing the rest of the program.

***"If we do not have the will to do this, we ask until it comes. Remember it was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol."***

## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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This Step may seem difficult; you may lack the willingness to do it. But all that is asked of you in this part of this Step is you 'make a list of all the people you have harmed'. You should have most of this list from Step Four.

In the second part you 'become willing to make the proper amends to those people' if you are hesitant, then check in with God at this point and figure out what His will for you would be. But remember, it is His will for you, not your will for yourself you are looking for.

To see if more people should be on the list, take another serious look at your life to see where you have caused harm to other people. You have asked for forgiveness for yourself and your past, why not start forgiving those which you have harmed.

### **What is meant by harm?**

**In the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 80, it states: "To define the word "harm" in a practical way, we might call it the result of instincts in collision, which cause physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual damage to people." (In Thesaurus, harm as a verb or action word means to: hurt, injure, damage, impair, mar or spoil.)**

Look for the mental, spiritual, physical, financial and emotional harm you may have caused. Avoid purposeful forgetting and search your conscience in a fearless and serious manner.

You may feel the harm you have caused others may not be too bad, but it could have also caused yourself great emotional harm which you may have forgotten, but which affected you in some way.

It may have caused you to form some curious mental twists of your own, such as lying, cheating, blaming, not trusting and therefore getting caught up in all kinds of gossip.

This Step is more for your good than the other persons.

There are times in your past where selfishness, anger, lack of forgiveness, being miserable, irresponsible, callous, or cold, blaming others and wanting to have things your way without any consideration for the other person, could have caused harm to people, especially in the immediate family.

Be willing to admit this (if it ever did happen to you) and add the names of those people on the list.

**'Honesty is required to start the first part of this Step.'**

**'Willingness comes after you have made the list of names so you will be able to do Step Nine.'**

### **NOW COMPLETE YOUR STEP EIGHT.**

Steps Eight and Nine are the 'personal relation' steps, that are designed so you can fit back into mainstream society.

Willingness to do this step is important and essential to your future if you wish for contented sobriety.

Now you have finished Step Eight, and you have your Step Four list. You also have the type of amend you are going to make, so take a break and then you will be ready for Step Nine.

***"FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD."***

## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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Your task is to go to your fellow man and repair the damage done in the past. You will be attempting to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of your effort to live on self-will and run the show yourself. You have identified all of these in Step Four and Step Eight.

**If you do not have the will to do this, then ask God and it will come if you want it.**

**Remember it was agreed at the beginning that you would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol.**



# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**

## 15.0 STEP NINE

'Amends' in Thesaurus is defined as: atonement, compensation, payment, recompense, reparation, or restitution.

You will need your Step Four to identify the people and type of amend you will make in this step.

Turn to page 76 in the Big Book.

Review Steps Six, Seven and Eight.

Step Nine starts at the third paragraph, where it states: ***"Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past."*** and ends at the first paragraph on page 84.



Notice the main purpose for doing Step Nine is stated on page 77:

***"Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us."***

Once you know the purpose for this step it makes sense why you should be doing it. It is just an extension of the step seven prayer.

Good, now that you have finished reading, you will review how to do the Step Nine exercise.

The Big Book lists several groups of people to whom you should be willing to make amends.

**It is time now to get ready to STUDY Step Nine.**

On page 76, the reason for Step Nine is explained; this will require a lot of 'will' on your part. If you do not have the will, then ask until it comes. Prayer is essential as you embark on this exercise.

Is making amends going to be a strange experience for you?

As stated in the book, you can have all the faith possible, yet it is nothing if you do not put it into action. ***"Faith without works is dead"***. Your action now is to go to your fellow men and attempt to repair the damage from the past. Clear away the debris you may have left as you tried to run the show yourself. This is an exciting experience and you can do it!

The last paragraph on page 76 will explain some misgivings about how you may feel and gives direction on the approach you take.

Look up the word **diffident** in your dictionary.

Be sure you have your full lists from **STEP FOUR** and **STEP EIGHT**.

Remember, you agreed to go to any lengths for victory over alcohol. This is just another step towards victory.

By reading the top of page 77 to the end of that paragraph, you find your effort is two-fold:

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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- a. You are trying to put your own life in order,
- b. Your real purpose in this step is to fit yourself to be of maximum service to God and the people about you.

It is good to remember the PURPOSE for doing this step. You are not a sheep which just follows the leader, so when you know the real reasons and purpose for doing something, you will then find it much easier to do.

In the first paragraph on page 77 you are advised to stay away from the strong spiritual approach if you are talking to someone who may be still smarting from a recent incident.

Don't be seen or branded as a religious fanatic.

## **A sincere demonstration of your good-will is important.**

The several groups identified in this Step are:

- The person or persons you hated.
- The people to whom you owe money.
- If you have committed a criminal offence.
- If divorced and have not lived up to obligations.
- If you have or had domestic problems.
- Repairing damage in the home, due to drinking.
- Amends to the deceased.
- Amends to those you will not be able to see.

Good, now start the study of the Big Book from page 76 through to page 84, to where it reads, ***"This thought brings us to Step Ten."***

As you study these pages identify the groups of people to whom you will make amends. The Big Book identifies these groups, and then outlines and explains the approach, the right action or attitude, the proper prayers, and the results, if you follow the suggestions as laid out in the Big Book.

Identification of these groups are outlined on the next few pages in this guide. Use the guide as you study Step Nine in the Big Book.

I know you are just raring to get started so get at it. LET'S GO!

## **The person you hated or disliked.**

Study the first paragraph on page 77. It explains two things:

- When and how to talk about your spiritual convictions, and
- How to deal with the person you hated.

Review what to do about this. The question asked is how you approach this person. Clear direction is given for the proper approach and frame of mind you should be in when you go to make the amend.

Study this carefully so you are prepared. ***"It is harder to go to an enemy than to a friend, but we find it much more beneficial to us"***

Back on page 67, there is a statement, ***"We cannot be helpful to all people, but at least God will show us how to take a kindly and tolerant view of each and every one."***

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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All the information and understanding you have from previous steps will give you the power to do the rest of the program.

The last paragraph on page 77 and the first on page 78 explains the action, the reason and the attitude for making this type of amend, plus the result if done in the proper way. This paragraph also highlights the results of this type of approach. This is the experience of others who did it this way. Make sure you understand this section prior to making amends with someone whom you hated or really disliked. Be in the right frame of mind and be honest with yourself. It works.

## **The person to whom you owe money.**

The second paragraph on page 78 explains how to approach this person. Study this paragraph and then make plans on how you are going to do it. The results should be about the same as what you have studied. Note the REASON for making this type of an amend is most important; sobriety is your goal, so do it. There may be someone you owe money to and they have forgotten, but have you? If something is bothering your conscience you probably have an amend to make. Making restitution relieves guilt.

## **Criminal offence.**

The last paragraph, on page 78, gives the explanation for the amend to this type of problem. The example of "**padding the expense account**" may not seem too serious, however, do not fool yourself and excuse the action by saying most people do it.

## **Divorce and Alimony.**

Page 79 discusses a common problem of being divorced and not paying alimony.

There is a prayer to use in paragraph one. Write it out and use it.

Now study from the second paragraph on. These paragraphs will discuss what to do if other people are involved. Notice the general principles for guidance in doing this. If you have to do this amend, then write out these principles.

**On page 80, the first paragraph also outlines several important principles to follow. Do not overlook these.** Read the example story on the rest of this page.

How many principles have been mentioned on pages 79 and 80?

## **Domestic troubles.**

Starting at the bottom of page 80 and reading to the end of the second paragraph on page 82, is a discussion and an 'action plan' to be followed for domestic troubles at home.

Note the comments and explanations, then follow the plan of action which is outlined in the second paragraph on 81.

The first paragraph, on page 82, gives direction and requires you to put a lot of thought into this type of amend. Use the prayer which is mentioned.

## **Repairing the home life after sobriety.**

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Starting with the second paragraph on page 82, ***"If we have no such complication, there is plenty we should do at home."*** Study over to the end of the second paragraph on page 83 which ends, ***"would make a skeptic out of anyone."***

Now you know and understand what is required of you.

Notice the do's and do-not's during the reconstruction period. Just staying sober is not enough. You need action instead of words, a demonstration on a continuous basis.

The type of meditation which you can practice is explained in the first paragraph on page 83. ***"The spiritual life is not a theory."*** You have to live it, or it does not work.

### **To those who are deceased.**

The third paragraph, page 83, is for the person to whom you can't fully make amends.

It simply means, ***'if you can honestly say to yourself you would make the amend and right any wrongs if you could,'*** then this amend is made. The best way to make amends to a person who passed away would be through God. Yet, so many members will hang onto this guilt and may even use it as an excuse not to move ahead in the program.

### **Those who you will not be seeing for a while.**

You will write an honest letter to them.

The last part of paragraph three, on page 83 tells you how to act, feel and present yourself when making amends. Do what the Big Book suggests and get on with life.

Now study to the end of the first full paragraph on page 84 and note the promises at the end of this step. These are the Step Nine promises, and before you are halfway through this step these promises will start to come true. Many think these are the only promises and talk about them after a few weeks in the program.

There are many promises within the steps, they come true depending on your action.

Notice these promises have one caveat; ***"They will always materialize if we work for them"***. You just don't get them; you must work for them. It only requires your "zeal and enthusiasm and stick-to-itiveness".

Dr. Bob said in his last talk at the First International Convention, in Cleveland in 1950. "I get a big thrill out of looking over a vast sea of faces like this with a feeling that possibly some small thing I did a number of years ago played an infinitely small part in making this meeting possible. I also get quite a thrill when I think that we all had the same problem. We all did the same things. We all get the same results in proportion to our zeal and enthusiasm and stick-to-itiveness". (Quoted from Dr. BOB and the Good Oldtimers.)

How many promises have you found in the first Nine Steps?

**ENOUGH FOR NOW,**

**IT IS TIME FOR A COFFEE BREAK AGAIN!**

**COFFEE IS OVER**

**NOW IS THE TIME FOR MORE ACTION -- AGAIN.**

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## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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You have studied the several groups or categories into which Step Nine is divided, so now review your Fourth Step.

- Divide all the people to whom you owe amends, into the appropriate groups.
- Prepare your amends from the last column in the Fourth Step work sheet, where you have answered all the questions in the headers of Step four, and figured out:
  - Where was I at fault?
  - What should I have done instead?
  - Was I selfish or not?

This will take some time, patience and common sense to complete. There are some amends you may not be able to make in the near future. Do not let this stop you from moving ahead with the rest.

Do the best you can. Remember, this is your **personal relations** exercise. The process of this step is to ***“fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us”***.

This part of the program is very important. It will help you step through the ‘archway to freedom,’ and will cement the ‘keystone’ in place so you can start moving away from the fear of the past and experience the freedom of today and the excitement of the future.

Once you completed this step, you can look the whole world in the eye and start to really live one day at a time with comfort and joy.

**Now you can get started placing your amends into the right groups.**

Great work! You have your amends in the proper groups. Now you can go out and start, and remember ***“we should be sensible, tactful, considerate and humble without being servile or scraping. As God’s people we stand on our feet; we don’t crawl before anyone.”***

**“THY WILL — NOT MINE, BE DONE”**

“I found this step is where I start building trust in my community, family and among past friends. Without it I would have struggled to fit back into society. It was another huge part of the keystone in my recovery.” Garnet W.

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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## Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

### 16.0 STEP TEN

This step starts at the second full paragraph on page 84 which states, "***This thought brings us to Step Ten***", and continues to the last full paragraph on page 85.

Study the first full paragraph written about Step Ten.

This suggests you continue to take a personal inventory and continue to set right any new mistakes as you go along. This is a spot check throughout the day. Remember, you are not perfect, so expect some of your old ways to crop up from time to time in the future. It states you will continue to set right any new wrongs as you go along. You have dealt with the past, so now anything that happens is new, even though it may seem to be identical to the past. Don't look back and condemn yourself; rather correct any new mistakes as you go along through the day and grow.

Once you have completed the first eight steps and as much of ninth step as possible, you have done what has been asked of you to this point and you have started to clean up your past and have **vigorously** started a new way of life. You have entered the world of the spirit with God as you understand Him.

The future is yours to embrace while working these steps.

The function of this step in your spiritual growth is to "***grow in understanding and effectiveness.***"

Step Ten is not a continuation of the Fourth Step, which dealt with your moral past. Step Ten is a growth step, and deals with today. It will enhance your spiritual growth on a day-to-day basis. This is a spot check you do immediately. You may not have done anything wrong, but just feel selfish, dishonest, fearful or resentful toward someone or something, and need to get rid of that feeling NOW so it does not control or interfere with the rest of your day.

Note the four-point check list:

1. Selfishness.
2. Dishonesty.
3. Fear.
4. Resentment.

These must be always monitored. When they crop up, ask God to remove them at once. If you have harmed someone you need to make an amend. Do it and then get on with the business of living. Then turn your thoughts to someone you can help.

Your new code is "***Love and tolerance of others.***" Remember this code and use it.

You will find yourself 'growing up' and slipping away from the childish ways of the past, where you used to hold grudges, sulk and make all kinds of excuses for what you were doing or had done and then use them as reasons to go out and get drunk.

Study the last paragraph on page 84 which ends on page 85, with "***keep in fit spiritual condition***".

## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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1. Are you less likely to argue than in the past?
2. If so, does this indicate you have quit fighting anything and everything, and trying to have it all your own way?

Things have likely changed for you. The reason is by this time sanity will have returned. You are seldom interested in alcohol and if tempted, you do not want it.

Your new attitude towards alcohol was given to you. All you had to do was work sincerely on the steps.

The drink problem will have been removed. This is a fact, as long as you keep working the program and keep yourself in fit spiritual condition. It is the same for the person who has to exercise to stay in fit physical condition.

Study the last paragraph on page 84 again. There are a lot of promises here if you do certain things. Write out those promises.

3. Review the step again and explain what you have to do in order to react in the way outlined in the paragraph you just studied?

Study the next paragraph on page 85. It explains the difference between recovered and cured.

Do not let up on your spiritual program of action; always keep yourself spiritually fit. Don't rest on your laurels. Alcoholism is always with you. It is arrested, not cured.

Drinking can and will take over your life again if you do not maintain your spiritual condition.

You can only stay sober one day at a time. All you have is a **"daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition."**

Stay in **"fit spiritual condition."** Do not be like a runner who practices every day, does what he has to do to stay in shape, then he decides to quit practicing. A few weeks later enters a race. He would find it tough to run a good race when he is not in good physical condition.

The same applies to you in your spiritual program. Keep using prayer and meditation, keep doing God's will, keep helping other alcoholics and you will stay in fit spiritual condition; but slack off and you are in trouble.

This paragraph in the Big Book explained how you practice and stay in shape. It also explains why and how you use all your will. When things are going well it takes a lot of will power to pray and be thankful, so learn to use prayer all the time. The proper use of will is to align your will with God's will.

Study the last paragraph of this step on page 85.

4. Have you carefully followed directions?
5. What is this **"sixth sense"** mentioned in this paragraph?

Review this full step again, make notes or mark your book.

6. What are the four problems to watch for?
7. How do you get rid of them?
8. What is your code in this step?
9. What is the miracle talked about in this step?
10. What do you have to do to receive the promises in the top paragraph on page 85?
11. If you are not cured, then what do you have?

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## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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12. How do you maintain this 'daily reprieve'?
13. What is the function or purpose of step Ten?
14. What part of your life do you deal with in this step? Is it your past, your present or future?
15. Do you now feel you just want to get on with the business of living and start to enjoy life?
16. How many promises do you find in this step?
17. How many prayers do you find in this step?
18. What does "*rest on our laurels*" mean?

Practice these principles daily and your life will change beyond your wildest dreams. This step allows you to get out of your own way and let God direct your life. It works.

If you wonder if you are in fit spiritual condition, go back to the last paragraph on page 84 which ends on page 85. This explains how you feel and if you identify with all of it, then you are in fit spiritual condition.

Remember, **God can only do for you what you allow Him to do through you.**

**JUST FOR TODAY**

[MY DAILY ATTITUDE CHANGE JOURNAL](#) (Appendix 1)



# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.**

## 17.0 STEP ELEVEN

Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve deal with the present and the future. They will give direction for the maintenance of your sobriety, enrichment of your spiritual growth and personal enhancement. These steps are often referred to as the ‘**maintenance or growth steps**’ of the program.

Your sobriety is just like a new car. It will require regular scheduled long-term maintenance if you expect it to operate in a proper and safe manner. The car comes equipped with a manual to tell you what to do, and when to do it. Your long-term sobriety also requires maintenance, and the instructions are in the last three steps of this program.

Step Eleven suggests you seek to improve your conscious contact with God as you understand Him, through prayer and meditation. You are to pray only for knowledge of God’s will for you, for the power to carry it out.

Step Eleven starts with the last two lines on page 85 and ends at the end of the chapter on page 88.



**Read Step Eleven now.**

Good! Now you have read it, so go back and study it. Notice, Step Eleven instructs us to review our day “***When we retire at night***”.

The first paragraph explains why prayer is important and asks you not to be shy about this. Lots of people use it constantly.

It guarantees prayer works if you have the proper attitude and work at it. To do something well you must practice it. Prayer and meditation have to be practiced until they are the natural thing to do.

This step is divided into three time periods: night, morning and daytime. Each period has directions to follow.

### **When you retire at night:**

In the second paragraph on page 86 are the suggestions of how and what you do. First, review your day. Check if you had been resentful, selfish, dishonest, or afraid.

Use these questions each night for topics of meditation:

1. Do I owe an apology to someone?
2. Have I kept something to myself when I should have discussed it with another person?
3. Was I as kind and loving as I could have been?
4. Did I do my best today?
5. Was I selfish today? Where?
6. Did I help someone else today?
7. Did I have good thoughts toward others?

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## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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Remember not to get into self-pity if everything did not go well. Don't get worried or remorseful about yourself.

After reviewing your day, ask God for forgiveness if you have been wrong in some areas, and pray for His direction to help you correct any wrongs.

There is nothing you can do about many of these things after you go to bed, so turn it over to God and have a good night's sleep.

### **On awakening:**

In the second paragraph of page 86, it states "**on awakening**" first consider your plans for the day. Before you begin ask God to direct your thinking. Upon awakening would mean when you wake up, not after you've got up and had your shower.

'If you're failing to plan, you're planning to fail.'

Notice it tells you to say a prayer and ask for guidance on how you should 'think' for the day.

#### 8. What does it warn you to be aware of?

The result of this is that your "**thought-life**" will be on a much higher plane. You will have positive thoughts, guidance and goals which makes the start of a good day.

In planning for the day, in the third paragraph, you may be faced with indecision. If this happens ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought, or even a decision. Then relax, quit fighting and take it easy. This does not mean to go and lie down; it means quit worrying and carry on with your daily life.

The top of page 87 explains what will happen if you keep seeking help and practicing what you have learned so far.

In the first full paragraph, you read about praying to get rid of selfishness, and when it is right to pray for yourself. Read this carefully and note what is important.

The last full paragraph, on page 87, gives you some instruction on meditation.

Several key points are mentioned. It talks about the religious organizations which will be able to help you. It tells you to carry on in your own spiritual practices (if we have them) and seek prayers which will emphasize the principles you have been learning. Be quick to see where religious people are right and use what they have to offer.

### **Review all of page 87 again.**

Make notes on the suggestions in the Big Book. All these will help you in the future if you can recall and use them on a daily basis. It helps save your strength and energy if you are not worrying about the things you cannot change.

With this step you learn how to '**plan your work and work your plan**' one day at a time.

'Plan your work and work your plan' is a motto used by many successful people. You can do the same with your day-plan it with God's help and then work it the way you planned.

Many members spend too much time worrying and they miss some good opportunities to be of service to God and others.

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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## What to do throughout the day:

Study from the last paragraph on page 87 to the end of page 88.

This gives suggestions on how to handle yourself throughout the day if you are feeling agitated or doubtful.

It contains many promises if we follow the suggestions.

9. Write out what you have to do to have discipline in your life.
10. How does this help save your energy?
11. Have you been undisciplined in the past?
12. Do you think this plan will work for you?
13. Well, when are you going to start?
14. How many prayers did you find in this step?
15. How many promises did you find in this step?

In the morning and evening read Step Ten and Step Eleven. Compile a checklist of what you will do in the morning, daytime and night. Keep this handy for referral purposes. The more you practice this, the more it becomes a part of the way you think, act and live. Do this until the principles and suggestions become an unconscious working part of your mind. This is the spiritual discipline mentioned in the last paragraph of the chapter.

16. Could "**spiritual discipline**" be the Virtue of Step Eleven? If so, explain it.

***"We alcoholics are undisciplined. So we let God discipline us in the simple way we just outlined."***

Another Step is done and you are now well into the maintenance, growth and discipline part of this program. You have done a Great Job!

Step Eleven could be compared to the use of a life jacket while boating. You wear it because it is meant to keep you afloat in case you capsize or run into trouble. On a calm day you may see little use for it, so you leave it lay in the bottom of the boat.

Next, as you are skimming across the calm water you hit a reef which is a few inches below water and immediately you are in trouble. The panic of trying to save the boat, your life and find the life jacket all while you are in the water may cost your life. And then you remember. I should have worn the jacket.

Step Eleven helps you keep your spiritual life jacket on at all times and keeps you prepared for whatever happens in your emotional or troubled waters of life. Don't get caught without it when there is an emergency, it could save your life.

Now take a little time and write out how and what you feel about the last two steps.

**Before going on to Step Twelve, it will be essential for you to do four things. These are important so please complete the following:**

- First:** Write out what your spiritual awakenings have been as a result of doing the first eleven steps. Try to get one for each step.
- Second:** Briefly write out the message you will try to carry to other alcoholics. This is the message received from the first eleven steps.

## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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- Third:** Make a list all the virtues you have identified in the first eleven steps.
- Four:** Identify the different areas of your life that you will be able to improve, enlarge or change with what you have learned in this program.

**SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND**

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**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.**

## 18.0 STEP TWELVE

Step Twelve has a full chapter devoted to it. You still require your Big Book, pencil and paper, plus all the notes you have made during the first eleven steps.

Chapter 7, "[WORKING WITH OTHERS](#)", is the key to your sobriety. You will put into action what you have been preparing for through the first eleven steps. You will soon have the great experience and pleasure of reaching out to another alcoholic and watching them recover as they follow the suggestions within the steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Because of your experience and recovery through the Twelve Steps and your belief in God as you understand Him, you will be able to share your gift of hope, sobriety and recovery with another alcoholic.

Step Twelve will show you what to do and how to carry this message. You will be able to do a 'twelve step call' and feel good about it. Fear will be removed.

Remember AA. is a program for those alcoholics that want it, some are not ready. We never judge.

So let us see how this is done.

First, read the full chapter from page 89 through to page 103. Underline or mark what you feel is important in this step. Make notes about it as you read. This will help.



**NOW READ THE FULL CHAPTER.**



Well, you have finished reading, so now let's start studying. No doubt you have marked a lot of interesting parts of this step. It is instructive and interesting. Let's go back to page 89.

In the first paragraph is a promise you have read many times to this point:

- working with other alcoholics and giving them this program will insure your recovery or immunity from drinking.

Remember you are the messenger, not the message. You ensure your own sobriety each time you reach out to another alcoholic and try to help them.

***"Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail."***

***"This is our twelfth suggestion: Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail. Remember they are very ill."***

You have been given a gift. Do not forget this in the years to come. Many members have reached a point where they quit attending meetings. They quit working with other alcoholics who could use and need their gift of recovery.

## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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Another point emphasized in this paragraph is that the alcoholic is usually very ill. This is not always another member sitting in the meeting. It may be someone who is still out in the public and requires knowledge about where and what a meeting is. It is the new person.

Do not fool yourself and figure just because you go to meetings and speak, that you are doing the twelfth step as outlined in the paragraph. This can be a lazy way, as it does not require any extra effort. Go find a new person to bring to a meeting. **That's what Bill and Dr. Bob did and, as a result, you are here today.**

In the second paragraph it tells you what you can expect to see and receive as you work this program.

The third paragraph cautions you in the approach and presentation you make.

Do you remember the proper approach to use with people we want to help which was mentioned on pages 18 and 19 and on the bottom of page 76 and top of page 77 in the Big Book? If not, look it up.

It also tells you to be co-operative with ministers and doctors. Don't be critical. To be helpful is your only aim.

Turn to page 90. Here you are told how to prepare for a call.

**Note:** What to do if they do not wish to talk to you, or will not talk to you. Preparation is very important. Study the proper procedure and use it when you can. You need this information because it outlines the procedure to follow before you meet them, and what to do when you first talk to them. It tells you what to talk about.

Read from the start of page 92 to the end of the first paragraph on page 93 which ends, **"what your own convictions are"**.

Some good additional directions are outlined here. Review [The Doctor's Opinion](#) again to refresh your memory.

The first paragraph on page 92 tells what part of your story to use at this time. They may feel they are not alcoholic. If this happens, recall what is outlined from the second last paragraph on page 20 to the end of the first full paragraph on page 21. This describes the different types of drinkers.

In the last paragraph on page 92 are instructions on which to focus. Refer to page 30 'The Doctor's Opinion'.

The first half of page 93 instructs you on what to do if the person you are calling on asks you to explain how you recovered.

This is the 'spiritual' explanation you can give. Refer to the last full paragraph on page 25, which will help in this explanation.

If the prospect argues about religion, follow the instructions in the last paragraph on page 93.

1. What vital things must faith be accompanied by?

Study page 94 and get the outline on what to tell them if they ask you how you recover. Take note of the directions outlined on this page. There are certain things you do and certain things you do not do.

It states, **"The more hopeless he feels, the better."**

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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Don't put the person down. Give them good solid, honest information, and present it so the hopelessness of the illness of alcoholism is explained and understood. ('The Doctor's Opinion' explains the obsession and allergy.)

At the bottom of page 94 you are instructed when to tell them about Alcoholics Anonymous. You have already told them about yourself so tell part of the A.A. story. Again, remember A.A. is for those who want it, some are not ready. We never judge.

Outline the points you feel are important from pages 93 and 94.

On page 95 in the first paragraph, you are warned not to pressure the new person. There is an explanation on the best way to do a Twelve Step call if you want it to be successful.

Write out the five simple rules to follow on a Twelve Step call. When you finish the list, glance back to the last paragraph on page 18. Compare this with the list you just made.

The rest of this page outlines the importance of carrying the message and not the alcoholic, and what to do at the conclusion of your first call if you are to see the person again. Make notes on these points.

On page 96, the first paragraph outlines what you are to do if the new person feels they do not want to carry on. It also gives you some ideas so you will not feel as if you failed.

Study the second paragraph on page 96 over to the end of the second full paragraph on page 97 which ends, "**serious complications in a family**", for explanations of the best way to help the new person.

**Note:** The warnings and the reasons why. They may sound harsh, yet it is the best way. This is a very important part of sponsorship to remember.

The last full paragraph on page 97 was written prior to Al-Anon. I suggest you contact Al-Anon to assist the family.

Page 98 in the paragraph which carries over from page 97 explains the two extremes you may run into. Beware of the person who tells you they require other things in order to get sober.

The next two paragraphs are solid warnings to you.

Be careful you do not give the impression to the newcomer that YOU are the answer. Be aware of your own ego; let the newcomer know from the start you can help, but they should find a 'Power Greater than themselves', as you did, in order to get well. Always remember, you are not that Power.

2. What is the only condition required for the new member to get well?

The first part of this step:

**"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps."**

At the end of Step Eleven you were requested to outline the spiritual awakenings you have had as a result of the first eleven steps. You meditated on their spiritual aspect. This covers the first part of this step.

The second part of this step: "**we tried to carry this message to alcoholics**",

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At the end of Step Eleven you were requested to outline the message you have received and will pass what you've learned on to the new person.

You have just studied and learned the process by which you do this.

3. What message will you try to carry to alcoholics?
4. What preparation is required?
5. How do you carry it?
6. What should you see as you twelve step and sponsor people?

The last part of the step: ***"and to practice these principles in all our affairs."***

At the end of Step Eleven you were asked to review the first eleven steps on page 59 and write out all the virtues you have identified.

7. Are you willing to continue practicing all these virtues?
8. Study the last paragraph on page 98 which starts, ***"Now, the domestic problem:"*** over to page 99.

If there was a domestic problem, the person you are working with should make reparation and explain the new principles/virtues by which they plan to live. It is the new member's spiritual demonstration which will count, not the family's. The same goes for you. Remember, demonstration was discussed on page 77.

Carefully study what is written in the paragraph at the top of page 99 and then read the instructions in the next paragraph. Tell the new person not to be afraid to attempt to repair any damage, because if they don't they could end up drunk.

In the second paragraph on page 99 is advice if separated or divorced. Study this paragraph carefully and if you are in this position, follow the basic principles laid out here.

The last paragraph on page 99 which ends on page 100, tells you not to be taken in by a sob story. The only thing required for sobriety is to start a good relationship with God.

When acting as a sponsor or doing a twelfth step call, always be aware of the cunning ways of the alcoholic. Some of the stories you will hear will be so sad, emotional and convincing that you may be tempted to go along with them. Stick to what you have learned and do not let your own feelings get in the way.

Do not lose sight of what 'God's will' would be for you at this time.

The next three paragraphs on page 100 are critical if you want to be a sponsor and yet stay neutral in your new person's affairs.

The first paragraph gives you guidance and guarantees your own growth.

The next two paragraphs instruct you on what to do with the family.

- Do not be afraid to let the family know about Al-Anon.
- If your spouse is in Al-Anon and your home life is good, then use this as an example and encourage them all to get involved.
- If there are children involved, then tell them about Alateen.

### **Some points to remember:**

- ✓ Never criticize other programs, or the family of the newcomer.

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## STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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- ✓ Set a good example and use all the principles you have learned.
- ✓ Always ask for God's help before you enter into any discussion with the newcomer or the family.
- ✓ Be patient and always remember your own struggles; let them grow at God's speed, not yours.
- ✓ Never give up on the person and always keep your door open, even when you feel they don't want help.
- ✓ If you have sown the seed of hope, prepare to wait for it to grow.
- ✓ Only God will know when the seed will spring to life. Be available to watch this new and exciting growth take place.

**Realize the seed may lay dormant for a few days or even a few years, and in the meantime, you can work with others.**

- ✓ All you are asked to do is to carry the A.A. message to the alcoholic; then leave it all in God's hands and stay ready to help.

Start studying from the last paragraph on page 100 over to the second full paragraph on page 101 which ends with, ***"These attempts to do the impossible have always failed."***

If you are spiritually fit as an alcoholic, you can do all sorts of things which most people would think impossible for them to do. Read the first paragraph again, very carefully.

In the first paragraph on page 101 it states; ***"We meet these conditions every day. An alcoholic who cannot meet them, still has an alcoholic mind; there is something the matter with his spiritual status."*** Read the rest of this paragraph and the following one.

Your sobriety should be based on your faith in God, not on fear of alcohol. You can never be shielded from the presence of alcohol. This is okay because you don't need it or want it. Review the promises in step ten on pages 84 and 85.

The last two paragraphs on page 101 which end on page 102 outline an attitude for going to bars or places where there is liquor. Study these carefully and then write out what you are to do when you go where liquor is served.

9. What is the proper attitude and what can you add to the occasion?
10. What should you do if you are not sure of yourself?

Remember: your recovery should be faith based, not fear based.

11. Were you able to understand the rule in the first paragraph and the important qualification and questions mentioned in the second paragraph? Remember this for the future.

Study the next two paragraphs on page 102.

The first one gives very good advice. Follow it and you will be okay as long as you are on solid spiritual ground.

The worst thing to do is to try and make the world and your friends or associates fit into your way of life. It's even worse if you are narrow minded and fearful toward the use of alcohol.

You now have gained the freedom and ability to fit into the community around you, and to be able to enjoy it. Demonstrate to the world that you are sober by your actions. Live the program all the time, not just at meetings. You may be the only example some alcoholic in need of A.A. will ever see.

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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The second paragraph on page 102 explains what your job is from now on in A.A. - ***"to be at the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others."***

12. Is this an extension of what you read on pages 77 and 84? Read those pages again. The promise in this paragraph is one which has proven true over many years. ***"Keep on the firing line of life with these motives and God will keep you unharmed."***
13. List these motives by reviewing the last two paragraphs on page 101. Write them out. These motives may save your life someday. In the last paragraph on page 102 it explains about keeping alcohol in our homes. Many members choose not to have alcohol in their homes, and many choose to have a liquor cabinet. Both are right; this is to be the choice of the individual and family, not yours. The only caution is the reason for the choice of no alcohol in the home. If it's because of fear of alcohol, then they have to do some work on their spiritual life or some other aspect of the program.

Study the first and second paragraphs on page 103.

14. Why should you never show intolerance toward liquor?

The final paragraph on page 103 sums up the program.

15. Have you accepted that your problems are of your own making?
16. Have you accepted that ***"bottles were only a symbol"***?

***"Besides, we have stopped fighting anybody or anything. We have to!"***

17. Do you feel this way now without being cocky about it?
18. Are you now ready to help another alcoholic and practice giving away what you have freely received so you can now enlarge your spiritual life and enhance your own sobriety?
19. How many prayers did you find during the study?
20. How many promises did you find during the study?
21. How many principles did you find during the study?
22. And how many times did you get angry and want to quit as you were going through this study? I am so glad that your honest answer was, NEVER, NOT ONE TIME.

**Give yourself a big pat on the back for finishing this study and then go out and give it all away to another alcoholic so you can keep it. Really, there was nothing to this, was there?**

## A.A. FIRST THE REST WILL FOLLOW

### CONGRATULATIONS.

- You have finished the step study. You are a better person for it.
- Spend time in prayer and meditate about what you have achieved and received.
- Show you are grateful by helping another alcoholic and you will receive the promises and rewards of sobriety and recovery.
- If you want to keep this program, you must always give it away. In this way you grow spiritually and fit yourself to be of maximum service to God and the people about you.

### GIVE AND YOU WILL RECEIVE

God has given you the gift of sobriety. You will have many opportunities to share this message of hope, love and understanding with those you will meet as you trudge the road to happy destiny.

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## NOW YOU CAN FINISH THE BASIC TEXT

You read at the start that the 'basic text', which is the first 164 pages in your book, was left unchanged.

Finish the 'basic text' by studying the following chapters:

- **TO WIVES,**
- **THE FAMILY AFTERWARD,**
- **TO EMPLOYERS, and**
- **A VISION FOR YOU.**

As you study these chapters you will receive guidance, hope and information regarding your future. They point out the problems caused by your drinking and will provide solutions to future problems which may arise.

Read "**Doctor Bob's Nightmare**" starting on page 171. He was the other co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. Then read "**Bill's Story**" again and try to comprehend what these two men started.

In classic Bill Wilson style, he sums up the program and the 12 steps with this prayer on page 164 of the Book.

***"Abandon yourself to God as you understand God."*** (Steps 1, 2, 3)

***"Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows."*** (Steps 4, 5, 6, 7)

***"Clear away the wreckage of your past."*** (Steps 8, 9)

***"Give freely of what you find and join us."*** (Steps 10, 11, 12)

***"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."***

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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## A.A. Principles and Virtues.

### A.A. Principles and Virtues.

The 12 Steps of A.A. are the principles of the program that we practice, as listed in the Big Book, pages 59 and 60. Over the years many lists of Virtues that correspond to each of the Twelve Steps and their underlying spiritual nature have been printed in local area A.A. newsletters and on pocket cards. The origins of these lists are unknown, although they are used by many Twelve Step members.

The following list came from a plaque on the wall of the Orange-Olive Friendship Club and may have come from an article in the Grapevine or the local area newsletter.

The following information is from the "Welcome to Silkworth.net" and was issued by Barefoot Bob.

### **The AA Principles and Virtues**

#### **Honesty, Surrender**

**Step 1** We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.

#### **Hope, Faith**

**Step 2** Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

#### **Faith, Commitment, Surrender**

**Step 3** Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.

#### **Courage, Honesty, Soul Searching**

**Step 4** Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

#### **Integrity, Truth**

**Step 5** Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

#### **Willingness, Acceptance**

**Step 6** Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

#### **Humility**

**Step 7** Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

#### **Brotherly Love, Reflection, Willingness**

**Step 8** Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

#### **Justice, Amendment, Forgiveness**

**Step 9** Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

#### **Perseverance, Vigilance, Maintenance**

**Step 10** Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

#### **Spirituality, Atonement, Making contact**

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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**Step 11** Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry that out.

## Service

**Step 12** Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, especially alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

From all of the above comes a primary Principle of Alcoholics Anonymous...

***“We have to give it away to keep it”***

“Virtues” are attitudes, dispositions, or character traits that enable us to be and to act in ways that develop this potential. They enable us to pursue the ideals we have adopted. Honesty, courage, compassion, generosity, integrity, fairness, self-control, and prudence are all examples of virtues. (Merriam-Webster)

## APPENDIX ONE: Step Four work sheets

The following 5 pages are intended to be filled out with conventional tools, such as a pencil or pen. Place your cursor (pointer thingy) on the page and select “Print Current Page” and it will appear from your printer (God willing).











Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_\_

MY DAILY ATTITUDE CHANGE JOURNAL (Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Self-Centered																Aware of others
Self-Indulgent																Helpful to others
Selfish																Generous
Self-Pity																Thoughtful
Smug, stubborn																Gracious
Impatient																Patient
Unrealistic																Realistic
Unreasonable																Reasonable
Resentful																Forgiving
Unkind																Kinder
Inconsistent																Consistent
Insincere																Sincere
Dishonest																Honest
Fearful																Confident
Pessimist																Optimist
Procrastinate																Purposeful
Ungrateful																Thankful
Irresponsible																Responsible
Arrogant																Humble
Total																

Make copies so you can use this worksheet again, use multiple sheets for different relationships (family, work, recovery etc.) On each day you can write a number from 1 - 4 based on the scale below. Total each day to see if your improving daily.

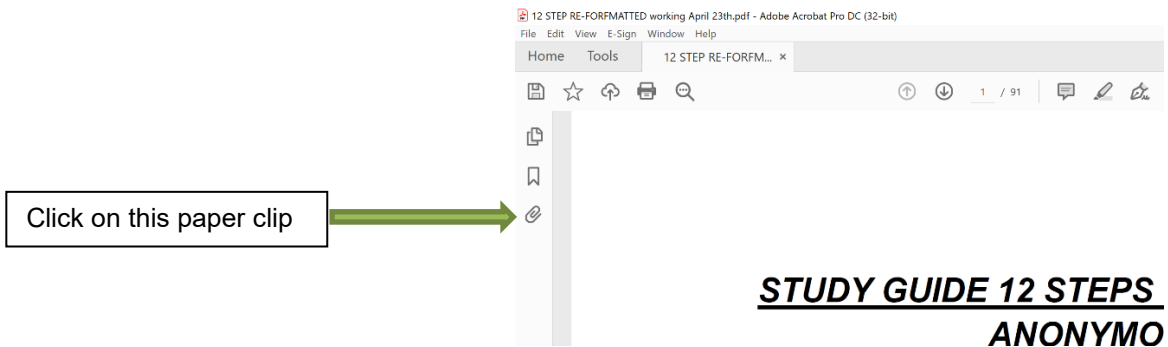
1 = same as yesterday      2 = little better      3 = feeling good      4 = kicked butt

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

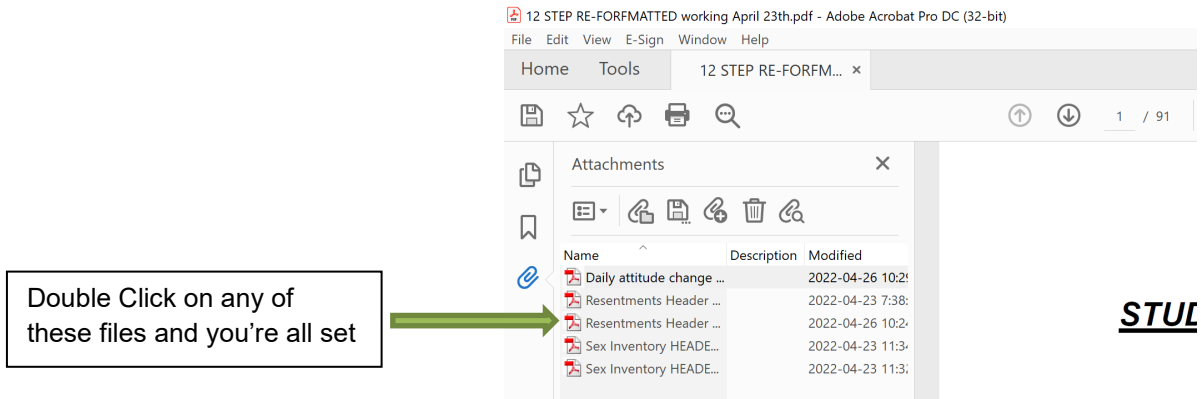
## APPENDIX TWO: Step Four work sheets Fillable

The fillable worksheets can be opened by following the two steps below. Once opened you can complete the forms with any electronic device you chose. Don't forget to save your work before you close you file.

### Step 1



### Step 2



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## APPENDIX THREE : Guideline for Step Series.

The chairperson must be prepared by knowing and understanding the system of this study guide prior to the start of the Step series.

The chair's function will be to **facilitate** the meeting and do all the reading from the Big Book. The participants follow in their books and mark what they find interesting.

The chair should stick to the specific topic of the meeting and not allow themselves, or the group, to talk about other parts of the program. Keeping the focus on what you are covering in each session is very important.

Open the meeting. Do not read "How It Works" or whatever you normally read until you get there in the study. Do not read anything from the Big Book which has not been covered in the study.

The first task is to get the group interested and to understand there will be requirements such as: This Study Guide, Big Book, pencil, notebook and a high-lighter to be brought to each meeting. The members should be encouraged to mark their Big Book with high-lighter.

**Note:** When members of the group have questions, have them write these out in their notebooks and see if they get answered during the full study. Do not be a "know-it-all" and give the answers. As they do this series, they will find their own answers. This provides a deeper understanding and ownership.

This series takes 15 sessions, each session lasting two hours.

### **ALWAYS REMEMBER:**

This is not a regular meeting where the discussions are personal and can get away from the topic, intentionally or otherwise. This is a study session and some of the participants may have to be made aware of this several times before they realize the difference. **Stick to the topic.**

### **Some other suggestions are:**

- The group should not be larger than 10 people.
- Once the series has started, no one should be allowed to start after the second meeting. It causes a disruption and that individual will not have had the introduction. Also, a lot of trust is built in the first few meetings.
- The same chairperson should do the whole series for overall continuity.
- Do not use outside speakers in this series.
- Each meeting will require about 2 hours at the start.

Starting in the second meeting, the first hour will be used by the participants to discuss what they have discovered and learned from the Big Book and study guide in the last session. The job of the facilitator is to assure all the members participate in these discussions and exchanges. This practice should continue throughout the series.

Be careful they do not get into a long-winded story about their past, always remember to keep the meeting focused on what has been studied in the last session.

The chair asks each one, by name, to speak. Because they are all alcoholic, they do not need to introduce themselves as an alcoholic. This will help them get away from the traditional ways they are used to in a regular meeting and will help to talk about the study and not themselves.

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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Make sure you have familiarized yourself with the Big Book and any additional material that will be presented in each session.

The recommended sequence is as follows:

## **Week one:**

Introduce yourself and open the meeting. Do not open with a reading from the Big Book. Use a prayer or a pledge. Some groups open their regular meetings with reading from the Big Book. But because this is a book study, you are not there yet, and you never get ahead of the study guide.

Have each introduce themselves, identify what their goal is and what they expect to get from this study program, how long they have been in A.A. Do they have a sponsor and a home group. Let them know you have made a commitment to complete this program with them, so ask if they have the same commitment.

- ✓ Stay away from your own interpretation of the material in the big book.
- ✓ Tell the group they are to develop their own interpretations and understanding from what they read. Anything you tell them about the program, which is not a direct quote from the big book, is your own interpretations and therefore it is biased. Make this very clear to them.
- ✓ Read aloud, from the big book. **Try to cover all the material which is outlined on pages 3 to 5 of this study guide. This will take you through The Preface, and the Forewords to the four editions.** Be able to make some historical comments, from the Big Book, that will highlight the importance of the information presented.
- ✓ At the end of the meeting do a quick review on how to use this guide. It requires them to read the information and then go back and study it. This takes a bit of practice before it makes sense. It is a Study Guide. The work involved in completing these few pages will require about 6 hours homework prior to the next meeting. Tell them not to go beyond what you have read. If they have time, review what they have done. Encourage them to highlight the information they found important to them in the Big Book. They will be talking about that in the next session. They should not try to do all of it in the night before the next session. Best to set aside time each evening to get through this. They will remember more.

## **Week two:**

Open the meeting. Welcome them all back.

Have each member, referring to the Big Book, give a brief outline on what they found interesting or important to them. Do just one part at a time. (ie) all will do Foreword to the first edition, and then repeat the same for the second, third and fourth Edition.

Question to see if they had marked the same information as others did. By them each referring to their highlights and sharing that, they are starting to 12 step each other.

- ✓ As they talk about points of interest they discovered, tell them to mention the page and the paragraph so others can follow in their books.
- ✓ Get comments from each member about how they feel about this study. Encourage them to stay with it, as it gets easier to understand as they go on. Limit the time so you will be able to read what is required from the Big Book

# STUDY GUIDE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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- ✓ Remember, this is a study series and not a regular meeting.
- ✓ Now Read **"THE DOCTOR'S OPINION"**. This is the homework for next week

## Week three:

**Open meeting, welcome them all back.**

- ✓ Get the groups comments on 'The Doctors Opinion '
- ✓ Because this is 12 pages long, you can divide it between the members so each reads a bit and then pass it on, again they should refer to the page and paragraph they are talking about. If they only use a sentence in that was important, ask them to read the full paragraph to get the context of the statement.
- ✓ When done get a quick group discussion on their feeling about this.
- ✓ Take a short break.
- ✓ Read Chapter 1. **"BILL'S STORY"**, the home study for next week.

If they have finished and have time it would be good to review The Doctors Opinion these chapters are a big part of preparing for Step One.

## Week four:

- ✓ Use the same format as used for past sessions.
- ✓ Again, Bill's Story is 16 pages long so divide it up.
- ✓ Have a quick review and then read Chapter 2. **"THERE IS A SOLUTION"**

## Week five:

- ✓ Open in the same way.
- ✓ This Chapter was 12 pages and a lot of information. Split the chapter amongst the group. Should be some good discussion on this week.
- ✓ When discussion is finished on 'There is a Solution' let them know that they are now ready to start on **Step One**.
- ✓ There are full chapters on Steps One, Two and Twelve, in the Big Book. Up to now you have been getting information and preparing for Step one.
- ✓ Read **"MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM". Step One**

## Week Six:

- ✓ Open in regular way,
- ✓ Group review "More About Alcoholism. Question, was it easier to understand the meaning of Step One after all they have studied up to now?
- ✓ When the discussion is over read **"We Agnostics", Step Two**

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## Week Seven:

- ✓ Open meeting,
- ✓ Using the Big Book, review “**We Agnostics**” .**Step Two.**
- ✓ Read “**How it Works**” over to page 60. Stop after the first paragraph on page 60 and explain that the next paragraph in the start of **Step Three.** Then read over to the bottom of page 63.

## Week Eight.

Open meeting,

Have the group review and discuss the last session. It was two parts, **How It Works** information and **Step Three.**

This Step usually has a lot of discussion. Do the “How Lit Works” part first, complete any discussion on this before you move to review Step Three.

At the end of this discussion, do the Step Three Prayer together.

**Before reading Step Four Explain that this step will be taken in three sessions, these parts are:**

- First part -self and resentment,
  - Second part -fear
  - Third part -sex.
- ✓ Start to read Step 4. The page numbers are in the Study Guide, follow it.
  - ✓ Only read to the end of the part on resentments. Be prepared to explain how to do this part of the step according to the Big Book.
  - ✓ Referring to the guide, show them how to use the work sheets. Let them know they will not have to reveal what they wrote out in their step four, but they can discuss the system or how they found doing this worked for them.
  - ✓ If you know people who do fifth steps, then let all the members know who they are. Have phone numbers handy. **They should be making the appointments to do the fifth step about 3 1/2 weeks from now.** It is best when they all complete the fifth step in the same week. That way no one is left behind the group experience.
  - ✓ The work sheets in the guide should be copied so you will have clear sheets for the future

## Week nine

Open the meeting, have the group discussion on how they made out in the last session on "Self" and "Resentments". The members do not talk about what they put in the Step Four on resentments, but they talk about the process and experience of using the charts.

- ✓ When the discussion is finished take a short break.
- ✓ Read all about **FEAR** from the Big Book, explain how to do this part and pass out the homework. This part does not take to long, so it gives them a chance to finish any work left from the last week.

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## Week ten

Open the meeting, have a group discussion on how they made out since the last session on "fear".

- ✓ Take a short break.
- ✓ Read the section about **SEX** from the big book, explain how to use the work sheet and then pass out the homework.

## Week eleven

- ✓ Open the meeting, have a group discussion on last sessions work. Again they do not reveal what they wrote but more about what they got out of this exercise.
- ✓ Review the full step four.
- ✓ Have the group give a quick overview of what they have learned so far and ask if it is what they had expected.
- ✓ Most should be finished with their step 4. If not, just carry on with the program; do not wait for anyone who is not finished.
- ✓ Take a short break.
- ✓ Carry on by **reading Steps 5, 6 and 7** from the big book.

## Week twelve

- ✓ Open the meeting.
- ✓ Have group discussion on last session's work - Steps 5, 6 and 7.
- ✓ Stress the importance of getting the fifth step completed soon for those who may not have completed it.
- ✓ Take a short break.
- ✓ Carry on by **reading Steps 8 and 9** from the big book.

## Week thirteen

- ✓ Open the meeting, have group discussion on last sessions work, steps 8 and 9.
- ✓ Take a short break.
- ✓ Read **Step Ten and Step Eleven** from the big book.

## Week Fourteen

- ✓ Open the meeting, have a group discussion on last sessions work.
- ✓ Take a short break.
- ✓ Read Chapter 7, **Working with Others, Step 12.**
- ✓ Pass out the homework for Step Twelve.

## Week Fifteen

Open the meeting, have a group discussion on last sessions work.

- ✓ Have a good general discussion about the whole series.

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- ✓ This is the wrap up session. Have each member summarize what they learned from the series. Were all their questions answered? Did they get more out of this than they expected?
- ✓ There will still be lots of amends to make.
- ✓ Encourage them to continue until they have completed the 12 steps, if they have not, and also to study the next four chapters.

They may want to carry on studying the next four chapters which is a lot of fun.

I hope you have enjoyed this type of a step study as much as we enjoyed putting it together.