



Make Yourself A Priority

STEP 7

“Humbly asked Him to remove our short comings.”

SINCE this Step so specifically concerns itself with humility, we should pause here to consider what humility is and what the practice of it can mean to us. Indeed, the attainment of greater humility is the foundation principle of each of A.A.'s Twelve Steps. For without some degree of humility, no alcoholic can stay sober at all. Nearly all A.A.'s have found, too, that unless they develop much more of this precious quality than may be required just for sobriety, they still haven't much chance of becoming truly happy. Without it, they cannot live to much useful purpose, or, in adversity, be able to summon the faith that can meet any emergency. Humility, as a word and as an ideal, has a very bad time of it in our world. Not only is the idea misunderstood; the word itself is often intensely disliked. Many people haven't even a nodding acquaintance with humility as a way of life. Much of the everyday talk we hear, and a great deal of what we read, highlights man's pride in his own achievements. With great intelligence, men of science have been forcing nature to disclose her secrets. The immense resources now being harnessed promise such a quantity of material blessings that many have come to believe that a man-made millennium lies just ahead. Poverty will disappear, and there will be such abundance that everybody can have all the security and personal satisfactions he desires. The theory seems to be that once everybody's primary instincts are satisfied, there won't be much left to quarrel about. The world will then turn happy and be free to concentrate on culture and character. Solely by their own intelligence and labor, men will have shaped their own destiny. Certainly no alcoholic, and surely no member of A.A., wants to deprecate material achievement. Nor do we enter into debate with the many who still so passionately cling to the belief that to satisfy our basic natural desires is the main object of life. But we are sure that no class of people in the world ever made a worse mess of trying to live by this formula than alcoholics. For thousands of years we have been demanding more than our share of security, prestige, and romance. When we seemed to be succeeding, we drank to dream still greater dreams. When we were frustrated, even in part, we drank for oblivion. Never was there enough of what we thought we wanted.

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TRADITION 7

"Every A.A. group ought to be fully self supporting, declining outside contributions."

SELF-SUPPORTING alcoholics? Who ever heard of such a thing? Yet we find that's what we have to be. This principle is telling evidence of the profound change that A.A. has wrought in all of us. Everybody knows that active alcoholics scream that they have no troubles money can't cure. Always, we've had our hands out. Time out of mind we've been dependent upon somebody, usually moneywise. When a society composed entirely of alcoholics says it's going to pay its bills, that's really news. Probably no A.A. Tradition had the labor pains this one did. In early times, we were all broke. When you add to this the habitual supposition that people ought to give money to alcoholics trying to stay sober, it can be understood why we thought we deserved a pile of folding money. What great things A.A. would be able to do with it! But oddly enough, people who had money thought otherwise. They figured that it was high time we now—sober—paid our own way. So our Fellowship stayed poor because it had to. There was another reason for our collective poverty. It was soon apparent that while alcoholics would spend lavishly on Twelfth Step cases, they had a terrific aversion to dropping money into a meeting-place hat for group pes. We were astounded to find that we were as tight as the bark on a tree. So A.A., the movement, started and stayed broke, while its individual members waxed prosperous. Alcoholics are certainly all-or-nothing people. Our reactions to money prove this. As A.A. emerged from its infancy into adolescence, we swung from the idea that we needed vast sums of money to the notion that A.A. shouldn't have any. On every lip were the words "You can't mix A.A. and money. We shall have to separate the spiritual from the material." We took this violent new tack because here and there members had tried to make money out of their A.A. connections, and we feared we'd be exploited. Now and then, grateful benefactors had endowed clubhouses, and as a result there was sometimes outside interference in our affairs. We had been presented with a hospital, and almost immediately the donor's son became its principal patient and would-be manager. One A.A. group was given five thousand dollars to do with what it would. The hassle over that chunk of money played havoc for years. Frightened by these complications, some groups refused to have a cent in their treasuries.

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Grapevine July 2023

Know Thyself!

BY: GARY T. | POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK

True humility comes when he accepts all that he is, good and bad

By the time I came upon the Seventh Step, I had already discovered many unsuspected defects and assets in my life. The extent that I had gotten to know myself was the extent that I experienced humility. For, as I understand it, humility, as expressed in the Seventh Step, is essentially accepting the truth about me.

Step Seven is not about humiliation, nor is it intended to rob me of my self-confidence, self-worth, or basic humanity. I believe the practice of humility that the Seventh Step calls for can be a source of great benefit. It enables me to let go of self-reliance and helps me to see my life in a balanced, healthy way.

Humility is not about self-judgment or condemnation, but it does mean knowing, at the core of my being, who I am and owning my strengths and limitations. Humility is about realizing that I have everything I need to stay clean, sober and have a happy life. Humility is also knowing that I don't have to do it alone, that I have a Higher Power and a support system in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous to help me.

Through all the previous Steps, I learned to apply spiritual principles such as self-honesty and self-acceptance in my life. And, to the degree that I practiced these spiritual principles, I began to slowly trust myself for the first time. With that self-trust, came the foundation for the humility.

Through the Seventh Step, I surrendered to the notion that I was powerless to remove my shortcomings, and to do it, I would need the Twelve Steps, a Higher Power and the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. If I humbly asked, just as I had been willing to "let go" in the Sixth Step, I can try to "let God" in the Seventh. This willingness to let go of my shortcomings is grounded in faith that my Higher Power is present, available and wants to change me for the better.

As I continued to work the Seventh Step, I experienced a freedom from my defects and shortcomings that felt almost physical. At times, it felt like a thousand-pound weight was being lifted from my shoulders. During prayer, I started to combine the practice of asking my Higher Power to remove my shortcoming with meditation. I repeated a part in the Seventh Step, "humbly asked him to remove our shortcomings," over and over, like a mantra. This enabled me to access the humility I was seeking with my body, as well as with my mind and spirit.

Another tool I use for cultivating humility is to remember where I come from. This keeps me humble and grateful, especially when I am tempted to take credit for all the accomplishments in my recovery life. I need to remember how humiliated, confused, insecure and frightened I felt at my first meeting, and compare that to how I feel today.

It is also important to acknowledge the progress I have made in recovery. It isn't helpful or humble to minimize the positive changes that have occurred in my life, nor am I being humble when I put myself down, which I find myself doing at times. For me, these are dysfunctional concepts of humility. They come from my sick ideas about a Higher Power, who, I thought, wanted to humiliate, condemn, reject and abandon me, none of which are true. Rejoicing in my progress is a form of praising and celebrating the presence of God in my life.

One of the major defects, however, that prevents me from rejoicing in recovery is self-centered fear. I've struggled with this character defect for as long as I can remember.

As an active alcoholic and drug addict, and even into early recovery, self-centered fear ruled my life. Some of the things I feared were people, life, my past, my Higher Power and recovery. I wanted my Higher Power to remove my shortcomings, but wasn't sure there would be anything left of me, if they were indeed removed.

Would my Higher Power descend upon me and, in one miraculous swoop, remove all my defects and shortcomings? What would happen to me then? Would I turn into a shell, a nonentity? Then again, I didn't have much to lose after alcoholism and drug addiction had taken everything physically, mentally, and spiritually from me. I already felt like a shell, a nonentity. To have my shortcomings removed sounded a little more like self-annihilation to me. What would happen to me? Would I still have a self? Would I have a personality or would I become a robot? Would I lose my individuality? Sounds silly now, but it wasn't then.

The first time I worked this Seventh Step, I did it exactly as suggested in the Big Book. I prayed: "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 that 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." Despite my fear and anxiety, I meant it. I was ready to have my Higher Power remove my shortcomings. I reflected for a while, contemplating what was going to happen to me. Was I going to have a dramatic spiritual experience? Would I go to sleep that night and wake up the next morning as a totally different person?

I wondered how much changing I needed to do or, in fact, wanted to do. Did the Seventh Step mean I had to be a saint from this moment on? I didn't understand the process and, to be honest, I still don't. But I have learned to trust in it. It's a gradual process that, at times, includes growing pains, but becomes a palatable process, once I become willing to experience my feelings, instead of denying or wanting to escape from them.

After working on this Seventh Step for a while, I realized it hadn't turned me into a shell or a nonentity, it allowed me to realize my full potential as a human being. It also helped me to be grateful for my positive qualities. My idiosyncrasies become more bearable and, to a certain extent, acceptable.

For me, the Serenity Prayer really captures what this Seventh Step is all about: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." I have often used this prayer as a guide to understanding how the Seventh Step can work in my life, and remind me that my Higher Power is the source of my serenity, courage and wisdom. The Serenity Prayer enables me to accept myself as I am, with all of my strengths and limitations. This is, essentially, the first part of the Serenity Prayer, as I understand it.

The Serenity Prayer teaches me to "accept the things that I cannot change." Once I became aware that I was powerless to remove my own shortcomings, I needed to turn them over and stop trying to control, manage, and change things myself.

When I was first introduced to this prayer, I thought all I needed to do was turn all my issues and problems over to God, without any effort on my part, and they would be removed. Sayings and slogans such as "Turn it Over" and "Let Go and Let God" translated into my believing I didn't need to do any footwork. This is not what the Serenity Prayer is about. The next part asks for the "Courage to change the things I can." I need courage to do the things that are within my ability. I need to identify my responsibilities and meet them wherever and whenever possible. I also need to do certain things to maintain my recovery, such as go to meetings, share with other recovering people, work the Steps, read the literature, etc.

The last part of the Serenity Prayer is the most difficult, "The wisdom to know the difference." How do I know when I am working on things I cannot change versus things that I can? How can I know when to "Turn It Over"?

By humbly asking my Higher Power to remove my shortcomings on a daily basis, I am consistently reminded of that which is still causing me, as well as others, pain and suffering. Through this process, I can focus on letting them go. But, since my defects and shortcomings are so deeply embedded in my personality, they are not usually removed instantaneously. I seem to find release from them for a while, then they surface again. A daily discipline enables me to develop an awareness of those defects that keep returning. The Seventh Step and Serenity Prayer keep me focused on change, transformation and spiritual growth.

Since my Higher Power works through other people, I have to be constantly aware of my tendency toward isolation, yet another character defect. Through the Seventh Step, I have come to the realization that quality sobriety requires relationship with others. Active alcoholism and drug addiction robbed me of the ability to have healthy relationships and created the illusion that I didn't need anyone or anything, except more alcohol and drugs.

Coming to grips with the unmanageability of my life before I got sober was very difficult. I didn't want to think about it and, above all, I certainly didn't want to talk about it, attempting to divert my thoughts and escape feelings through isolation. Of course, things got worse. I finally had to surrender.

Surrendering didn't mean giving up my independence, though. It states in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, "The more we become willing to depend upon a Higher Power, the more independent we actually are." I believe I was created to have independence and healthy relationships. Today, independence and relationships form a dynamic balance, which I maintain by striving for the serenity to accept the things I can't change, the willingness to turn things over, and the courage to put my time and energy into things I can change. That is the wisdom to know the difference.

I don't believe I will ever be totally free from my shortcomings, nor will I ever rise above my human limitations. But, I do believe I can be free to search out my own true self, that part of me that was buried under years of active alcohol and drug addiction. I can transcend my current limitations, discover new avenues to happiness and serenity, and I can truthfully say that I know who I am today. And today, I am enough.

D19
Third Legacy Meeting

1st Wednesday of Month, 6PM
AA Central Office
1625 E Marine View Dr #1975, Everett, WA 98201

dist19thirdleg@area72aa.org



2023 Position	Chair	Contact Info	E-mail	Contact
Dist. Com MBR. (DCM)	Sooz. B		dcm@dist19aa.org	
Alt Dist. Com MBR. (DCM)	Shae T		altdcm@dist19aa.org	Text / Email
Secretary	Joe T		secretary@dist19aa.org	Text / Email
Alt Secretary	OPEN			
Treasurer	Michael B		treasurer@dist19aa.org	Call / Text
Alt Treasurer	OPEN			
Accessibility	Angie. M		accessability@dist19aa.org	Call / Text
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ALT Treatment	Heidi W		alttreatment@dist19aa.org	Call/Text
Web Chair	Laura M		webmaster@dist19aa.org	Text / Email

2023 General Service Conference Report
June 11, 2023
Lynnwood Alano Club
4001 198th St SW #6
Lynnwood, Washington 98036
1:30 to 4:30



Pizza Party
7th Tradition Observed
Districts 19 and 24
Meet Your Delegate and ask her questions about the General
Service Conference or anything regarding AA in general

July	July 7 & 8: Area 72 Committee Quarterly Business Meeting. (Kitsap Conference Center 100 Washington Ave Bremerton, WA 98337) July 15: Area Treatment Quarterly Meeting (Third Saturday) July 15: Area Accessibilities Quarterly Meeting (Third Saturday) July 22: Area Web Committee Quarterly Meeting (Fourth Saturday) July 22: Area Young Person's Quarterly Meeting (Fourth Saturday)
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How to be of service in AA

Treasurers, Please Join Us!

June 28, 2023

D19 Business Meeting

Zion Lutheran Church

**4634 Alger Ave, Everett
Downstairs**



Attention Group Treasurers!!

June 28 @ 7PM, D19's Guest Speaker is,

Lisa, Area 72 Alt-Treasurer

Where does money and spirituality mix?

**What does a group treasurer do? What happens to 7th
tradition money? In what ways does or should District
support groups? What questions do you have?**

**Any member is welcome to join our business meetings regardless of district
affiliation. Come take advantage of this opportunity, you'll be welcomed.**



Birthday Night!
Last Saturday each Month

**Living
Sober**



Coins, Cake & Fellowship!

Open Meeting at 5:30pm
Birthday Celebration at 6:30pm

Alano Club of the Eastside
12302 NE 8th St. Bellevue 98005

Step Ashore!
IX

August 10 - 13, 2023 **Ocean Shores Convention Center**

The Northwest Woodstock of AA

PSYCHIC CHANGE AA MEN'S RETREAT

Register Early!

\$165 before May 1st

\$175 after May 1st

A 12 Step Weekend

Sept 15-17 2023

**Speaker: Steve L
Redondo, Ca**

Camp Arnold
33412 Webster Rd E
Eatonville, Wa 98324
Camp Phone: 253-847-2511
Tsacamparnold.org



Check-In 4:00pm Friday
Check-Out 12:00pm Sunday



*Dorm style housing. Bring sleeping bag, pillow, toiletries, snacks, etc.....
Meals included...**NO SMOKING ON GROUNDS**

REGISTRATION LIMITED TO THE FIRST 100 PAID

QUESTIONS? CALL ALAN O (253)355-9319, MATT F (253)682-7696 OR TONY W (253)226-9446

E-Mail Registration: <https://psychicchangeretreat.com/home/>

Name: _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: () _____ - _____

e-Mail: _____

\$ _____ Donation for Scholarship

\$ _____ Registration(# of Reg. x \$165)

\$ _____ Total

Psychic Change Retreat c/o
Tony Winn
5507 Milwaukee Ave e
Puyallup, Wa 98372

July 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4 7pm Central Office MTG Via Zoom ID: 874 5921 0224	5 Dist19 3rd legacy mtg 6pm Location Central office	6 7pm Dist. 12 Business mtg 1212 Califor- nia ST @ Re- covery cafe	7	8
9	10	11	12 Newsletter Submission	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26 Dist 19 Business mtg 7pm-8:30pm	27	28	29
30	31					

District 19 Business Meeting is held at Zion Lutheran Church 4634 Alger Ave Everett, WA 98203

Central office 1625 E Marine View Dr Unit 1975 Everett, WA 98201

**Have an idea or event
to share in the newsletter please feel
free to contact me at
Newsletter@dist19aa.org**



**Just a reminder... Please be sure to have Articles or
Addition to the newsletter into the Editor by the 2nd
Wednesday of the month... we go to the Printer on the
3rd Wednesday of the month to be ready for pick up
prior to the District 19 business meeting the last
Wednesday of the month.**