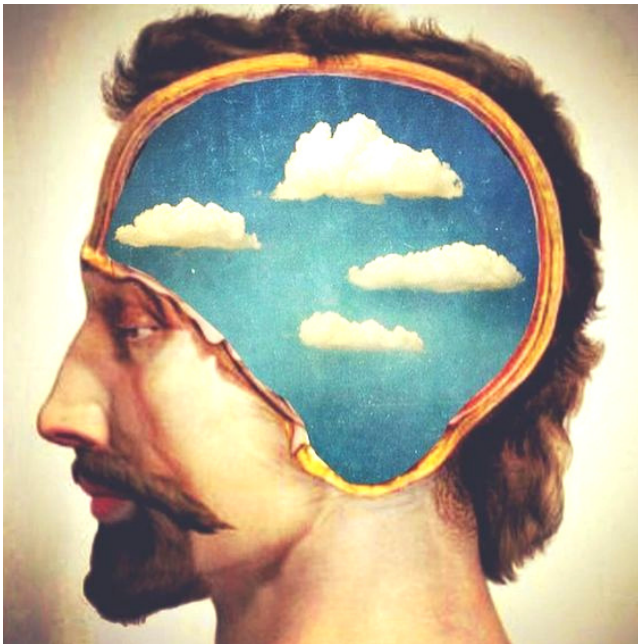




April 2020

# The Serenity Times

The monthly newsletter of the Darwin District



## Pausing

*As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action - Into Action, p 87*

*As the day goes on, we can pause where situations must be met and decisions made, and renew the simple request: "Thy will, not mine, be done" - Step Eleven, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p 102*

When I remember to pause and make conscious contact with God before making a decision or when agitated or doubtful (Step Eleven), it makes all the difference because that short pause is usually all it takes for God's will to replace my will.

Our serenity and our lives depend upon living our lives in conformity with God's will rather than our own. But first we must forge a connection to God through a spiritual awakening.

If you have completed Step Five and you are yet to feel God's presence, find someone in AA who does and ask to be shown how to have a spiritual awakening, then go back to Step One because you have missed something.



## Loneliness

*Almost without exception, alcoholics are tortured by loneliness - Step Five, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p 57*

From a young age, I suffered with a terrible aching loneliness. I was elated to find alcohol because it relieved those feelings.

I worked a 12-Step program with an AA sponsor for years but I continued to feel lonely; I also felt no connection to God. I had had plenty of exposure to spiritual principles in AA, *but no experience of them*. I knew a whole lot about the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts, *but nothing about God*. I found someone who had had a spiritual awakening through the Big Book and I asked her to show me how to have one. My new sponsor told me that God would provide me with all of the love and companionship I needed and that with God in my life, I need never be lonely again.

I was shown a way of doing Step Four that was more thorough than I was used to and this time I experienced enough humility to have a spiritual awakening. Just as the authors of the Big Book promised, at Step Five I felt God's presence and my whole life changed. I saw that my former loneliness was the terrible pain of my disconnection from God and that I had been cut off from spiritual nourishment, suffering from a spiritual hunger that only a connection to God could relieve.



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## Step Ten

*Step Ten...suggests we continue to take personal inventory and continue to set right any new mistakes as we go along. We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past. We have entered the world of the Spirit...Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear. When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them. We discuss them with someone immediately and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone - Into Action, p 84*

As soon as we started making our amends (Step Nine), we started on Step Ten, which suggests that we watch, ask, discuss and make amends throughout each day and that we vigorously commence this daily practice as a new way of life.

Perhaps at some point we rested on our laurels and stopped practising Step Ten throughout our day. Then maybe we stopped meditating because we couldn't tolerate what came up in the silence. We began to feel empty, so we tried to fill that emptiness with people, sex, food, exercise, social media or some other obsession. We were no longer in fit spiritual condition.

Recovery from alcoholism is a process not of addition *but of subtraction*, of the removal of the things that are blocking us from being in conscious contact with God. For us to live free, we need to continually empty out, not fill up, and we need to do it over and over again, which is the purpose of Step Ten.



## Step Twelve

Our Twelfth Step suggests that once we have had a spiritual awakening, we carry AA's message to alcoholics.

While we can do AA service any time, we should do 12<sup>th</sup> Step work only after we have had a spiritual awakening. Until we have a spiritual awakening, we will be unable to show other alcoholics how to have one and the only thing that we will pass onto other alcoholics is spiritual ill-health. What does it mean to be spiritually awake? It means being in conscious contact with God.

The Darwin District maintains five 12<sup>th</sup> Step rosters: a 12<sup>th</sup> Step call roster of AA members available to pay visits to callers' homes, three 12<sup>th</sup> Step rosters for AA members interested to carry AA's message in rehabs or correctional facilities, and the 24-hour phone roster.

The District maintains 12<sup>th</sup> Step rosters not for the benefit of the public, but as a service to the AA Groups it serves so that the members of AA Groups in the District have opportunities to practise their Twelfth Step as part of their 12-Step program of recovery. For that reason, the District never chides or criticises AA members for failing to join its 12<sup>th</sup> Step rosters. How AA members choose to work their Twelfth Step and whether they work it at all are matters for each individual's recovery and none of the District's business.

If you or your Home Group is interested to fill positions on the District's 12<sup>th</sup> Step rosters, contact the DDO.