



October 2019

The Serenity Times

The monthly newsletter of the Darwin District



The engine

....we had but two alternatives: One was to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best we could; and the other, to accept spiritual help - There Is A Solution, p 25

He has lost control - There Is A Solution, pp 23-24

Lack of power, that was our dilemma - We Agnostics, p 45

To complete Step One is to fully concede that on our own power we will be unable to stay sober, that we are powerless over alcohol, that nothing human (AA meetings, the Twelve Steps, the Big Book, trying hard to stay sober, trying hard to be a better human being) can keep us sober, that only God's power can keep us sober.

Step One is the engine that drives all of the other Steps in our 12-Step program. The alcoholic who comprehends what Step One means will go to any lengths to achieve and maintain conscious contact with God, which is AA's solution for alcoholism. If we are baulking at any of the Twelve Steps in AA's 12-Step program, then we simply have not understood Step One.



Self-propulsion

The whole emphasis of Step Seven is on humility. It is really saying to us that we now ought to be willing to try humility in seeking the removal of our other shortcomings just as we did when we admitted that we were powerless over alcohol, and came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity - Step Seven, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p 76

Neither could we reduce our self-centredness much by wishing or trying on our own power - How It Works, p 62

Alcoholism is an illness which is characterised by lack of power, which is why trying to solve our own problems and eradicate our own defects of character doesn't work for us. Telling an alcoholic to simply practise tolerance or unselfishness or to "let go" of fear or self-will is like telling an alcoholic "just don't drink"; it doesn't work, nor is it AA's solution.

What is AA's solution? God's wisdom and power. If we practise and continue to practise a rigorously honest 12-Step program, *God will change us*. And as we develop our conscious contact with God through a daily practice of prayer and meditation (Step Eleven), *God will provide us with solutions to our problems*.

LP

LP



October 2019

The Serenity Times

The monthly newsletter of the Darwin District



Ticket to freedom

We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness - Into Action, p 83

Step Nine is the Step where we connect to others and finally get free.

My whole life I walked around in what seemed like a Perspex cylinder, cut off from other human beings. Finding alcohol was a Godsend; when I was drunk, the Perspex cylinder disappeared.

I worked a 12-Step program with an AA sponsor for years but I continued to feel disconnected from others. I now know why: I had unmade amends. I found someone in AA who had had a spiritual awakening and I asked her to show me how to have one. She showed me a way of taking moral inventory that was more thorough than I was used to and I ended up with 52 new amends!

At Step Nine, I went to every person and institution on my Step Eight list that I could find, including those who had died, and I told them that I was wrong to have done what I did, that they didn't deserve to be treated that way and that I was truly sorry. I asked if there was any other wrong I had done them and anything that I could do to make things right.

By the time I was halfway through my list, I felt more free than I could remember ever having felt. My humble amends were responded to with generosity and kindness and disconnection was replaced with connection.



Financial amends

For us, material well-being always followed spiritual progress; it never preceded - The Family Afterward, p 127

It did not matter too much what our material condition was, but it did matter what our spiritual condition was - Step Twelve, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p 122

Many years sober in AA, I started back at Step One with a new sponsor and I discovered some new financial wrongs. While I could ill afford new financial amends, there was no question that I wanted to stay sober and that I wanted to be free, so I knew that they had to be made.

Money had always seemed to flow out of my life almost as soon as it flowed in. I sometimes wondered whether my bank account contained a leak. Now I knew why: I had unmade financial amends.

Now when a sponsee tells me that her financial position is poor or that she is bad with money, I know that she has unmade financial amends.

LP

LP