

Subject: Alcoholics Anonymous Step Two

This is what I've come up with for us to thoroughly work Step Two... Please review and get back to me at your earliest convenience. Thanks! And remember, Step Two ONLY asks us that we come to believe in that Power.

Step Two: "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

A Power Greater Than Ourselves: Each one of us comes to recovery with a whole history of life experiences. That history will determine to a large degree the kind of understanding we develop of a Power greater than ourselves. The key here is not what someone else has force-fed us; it is what we truly believe inside our own heart.

Regardless of what anyone else's conception is, it is not our own. We have to dig deep down and figure out what it means to us. We're not concerned here with theological elegance or doctrinal adherence - we just want something that works. Our addiction led us down a path of insanity and caused us to act differently than we wanted to behave. We need something to combat that, something at least as powerful as our addiction.

If G-d is not your Higher Power, then maybe the Fellowship of AA can be for now. Or maybe it can be a doorknob! The choice is yours. The important thing to acknowledge is that this Power is much stronger than you are and will not allow you to be alone in your addiction. If you feel alone, then that is a choice you have made and you are not using the tools.

The Spiritual Principles encompassing Step Two:

- Hope (We must open our minds to things we do not understand).
- Trust (We must trust something we cannot see or touch).
- Belief (We must believe that we can lose our insane thoughts/actions).

Assignment #1 for Step Two:

Write (not type) what these words mean to you. After writing, look up the definitions to the following words in a dictionary:

1. Believe
2. Greater
3. Restore
4. Sanity
5. Share what you wrote with your sponsor, another AA member or your home group.

Assignment #2 for Step Two:

Write down each of these questions on a separate piece of paper. Then answer them to best of your ability.

1. In what do I believe?
2. What are the characteristics my Higher Power has?
3. What are the characteristics my Higher Power does not have?
4. What fears do I have, that are getting in the way of my trust in a Higher Power?
5. What is my understanding of Step Two?
6. Share what you wrote with your sponsor, another AA member or your home group.

NOTE: Before completing this assignment, take 10 deep breaths. Close your eyes while doing so and try to clear your mind. Maybe this is your first attempt at meditating, maybe not. But give it an honest shot. Read each of the questions you have written down one at a time, and then spend 2-3 minutes with your eyes closed, undisturbed, in complete silence and ponder the answer. After you have thought about it, write (NOT type) your response on that piece of paper and then answer them with as much detail as you can.

Assignment #3 for Step Two:

Read Chapter 3 (pgs 30-43) in the Big Book titled "More About Alcoholism."

1. As you are reading, you will notice there are stories about 4 different characters in this chapter.
2. As you are reading, try to identify what you relate to in each story. Also notice their insane rationalizations for drinking.
3. When you are done with the chapter, take a few minutes and write a paragraph or two that identifies what you related to with each character.
4. Share what you wrote with your sponsor, another AA member or your home group.

Assignment #4 for Step Two:

Read Step Two (pgs 25-33) in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and talk about its meaning with someone.

Assignment #5 for Step Two:

Keep this thought at the front of your mind at all times: "Ask yourself: Right now, am I doing everything I possibly can to live "in" sanity? Or am I a living insanity?"

How to Share in a Meeting

I'd like to outline a simple and principled method of sharing a message of experience, strength and hope at meeting level. Following these suggested guidelines has enabled me to speak in a way that few people in meetings know how to. It is simple. It is effective. I try to follow these suggestions and I find that the more closely I adhere to them the more G-d can work through me.

1. Part of sharing is sharing time. Give others a chance to share. Three minutes is all it should take to carry the message at meeting level. (Humility and Service – Steps 7 & 12)
2. If you share a problem, *also share the solution*. (Hope, Faith, Integrity and Service – Steps 2, 3, 5 and 12)
3. *Sharing IS* carrying the message and that means sharing about a spiritual principle or step. (Hope, Faith and Service – Steps 2, 3 & 12 and Traditions 1, 5 and 11)
4. If G-d wants you to share someone will call on you. (Faith, Integrity and Humility – Steps 3, 5 and 7)
5. When you have very little to say; then say very little. Do not start by saying, "I really don't have much to say", and then ramble for the next 15 minutes. It is selfish and it blocks others from sharing the real message by taking up valuable meeting time. Brevity is the hallmark of efficacy. (Courage, Integrity, Willingness, Humility and Service – Steps 4, 5, 6, 7 and 12)
6. A 12 Step meeting is not group therapy, counseling, church or a garbage dump. This is the place to carry the message of recovery, not spread your disease. *You are there to carry G-d's message, not your own*. We are, at best, vessels for the message of a loving Higher Power. (Hope, Faith, Humility, Brotherly Love, Spirituality and Service – Steps 2, 3, 7, 8, 11 and 12 and Traditions 5 and 11)
7. After you share do not get up and walk right out. Set an example for the newcomers. (Willingness, Humility, Brotherly Love and Service – Steps 6, 7, 8 and 12)
8. If you can't get to the meeting on time you have surrendered your right to share. (Willingness, Humility and Service – Steps 6, 7 and 12 and Tradition 11)
9. A step or topic meeting is about that step or topic. *It is not about you*. If you know little or nothing about the step or topic *then do not share*. (Honesty, Integrity, Humility – Steps 1, 5 and 7)
10. If you share you should also contribute to the 7th Tradition. (Integrity, Willingness, Humility, Brotherly Love, Spirituality and Service – Steps 5, 6, 7, 8, 11 and 12 and Traditions 1 and 7)
11. Do not call on yourself. This is rude. This is not recovery. If you feel powerfully moved to share then politely attract the attention of the chairperson and wait to be recognized. (Honesty, Faith, Integrity, Willingness, Humility, Brotherly Love, Spirituality and Service – Steps 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11 and 12 and Traditions 1, 2, 5, 9, 11 and 12)

This is by no means a comprehensive list of guidelines. "G-d will constantly disclose more to you and to us." Furthermore, I have not been able to maintain anything like 'perfect adherence' to these principles. I have been able to share the message more effectively when I have been able to stay close to these guidelines and when I ask G-d to work through me to help the next sick and suffering alcoholic/addict.