



LESSON ELEVEN

STEP TWELVE

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.

It is important to remember that our program is one of attraction. We are not called upon to go out to our local saloon and recruit members. The best Twelfth Step work we can do is by example. Using the tools of the program we are called upon to go “out there” and participate in a full, rich, and creative life.

There is a danger of “hiding in the Fellowship.” It is a safe and protective haven, but it is not recovery. Once we are well anchored in the program, once we have a secure foothold in reality, it is time to take risks. Often it is a trial-and-error process. Slowly we establish a new value system. We find our true identities and live them to the fullest, receiving strength and courage from our fellow members, sponsor, and Higher Power.

When going on a Twelfth Step call it is important that we not go alone. Also, it is often a waste of time to talk to someone while they are drunk. The best time is the morning after, when they are hungover and most contrite. Remember: “We carry the message—not the drunk.”

Whether on a Twelfth Step call or at a meeting, always speak in the *I* forum and never in the *you*. We are to share our own strength, hope, and experience. We are not there to teach, threaten, exhort, warn, or advise. That is the area of a sponsor, therapist, counselor, or doctor. We tell our story and trust that their Higher Power will guide them to identify with us.

We did not make the person drink, nor can we make that person sober. Recovery is in the hands of that person's Higher Power. All we are called upon to do is in the footwork, and we trust the outcome to the Higher Power.

It is important to recognize and accept our own limitations. Not all are gifted in speaking to a potential new member. There are many ways to do Twelfth Step work—from setting up a hall to holding an office, or writing for the *Grapevine*; from being a sponsor to sharing at a meeting, or giving a ride to someone who needs one; from being a GSR (General Service Representative) for a group to attending AA social events, or by simply going for coffee with members after a meeting.

KEY IDEA 1

A spiritual awakening is an essential part of our recovery.

HARDCOVER	PAPERBACK
PAGE 115, PARAGRAPH 4	PAGE 119, BOTTOM
	PAGE 120, TOP

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

A breakthrough in denial constitutes a “spiritual awakening.”

KEY IDEA 2

There would be a group of disgruntled alcoholics, temporarily on the wagon, living in a perpetual state of mental drunkenness.

HARDCOVER	PAPERBACK
PAGE 116, PARAGRAPH 1	PAGE 120, PARAGRAPH 2

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

How does alcoholic thinking reflect our buried feelings?

KEY IDEA 3

They had undergone a profound personality change for the better.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 117, PARAGRAPH 5

PAPERBACK

PAGE 122, PARAGRAPH 1

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

A change of attitude produces a personality change.

KEY IDEA 4

The quality of their sobriety does not seem important in the beginning.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 122, TOP

PAPERBACK

PAGE 126, PARAGRAPH 4

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

People experience the “pink cloud”—the exhilaration of being physically alcohol-free.

KEY IDEA 5

They told us personalities were not changed overnight and we should be more open-minded and patient in working out the many details of our recovery.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 122, PARAGRAPH 3

PAPERBACK

PAGE 127, PARAGRAPH 2

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

A new value system takes time to construct. New ideas have to be weighed and measured.

KEY IDEA 6

It looks like the real thing but fails to stand up against adversity, resentment, or the physical craving for alcohol.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 123, PARAGRAPH 3

PAPERBACK

PAGE 128, PARAGRAPH 1

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

It is possible to “play act” recovery. We recite all the slogans and say all the things we are “supposed” to say.

KEY IDEA 7

The principle of working with others is sound, as it is founded upon the ageless axiom, “Give and you shall receive.”

HARDCOVER

PAGE 129, PARAGRAPH 2

PAPERBACK

PAGE 134, PARAGRAPH 2

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

The more we give love, the greater our capacity to receive love increases.

KEY IDEA 8

First, they look to us for counsel to help them overcome their drinking problems; they then look to the AA program for rehabilitation of their lives.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 132, PARAGRAPH 2

PAPERBACK

PAGE 137, PARAGRAPH 2

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

We may feel fearful of becoming a sponsor. All that is needed is trust in one's Higher Power, knowing that the sponsee also has a Higher Power looking after him or her.

KEY IDEA 9

It is the momentary loss of self-centeredness.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 135, PARAGRAPH 2

PAPERBACK

PAGE 140, PARAGRAPH 2

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

We cannot feel another person's feelings. The basis of empathy is recalling similar feelings we have experienced, then understanding what the other person is going through.

KEY IDEA 10

We will avoid flooding our ranks with an unwieldy preponderance of nonalcoholics.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 137, PARAGRAPH 1

PAPERBACK

PAGE 142, PARAGRAPH 1

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

No one enters AA because they are healthy. Some are sicker than others.

KEY IDEA 11

If an alcoholic wants no part of AA, we can still carry the message to inquiring relatives.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 137, PARAGRAPH 2

PAPERBACK

PAGE 142, PARAGRAPH 2

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

Is this a disease or is it a moral issue? Why is it unreasonable to think a non-addict should understand our addiction?

KEY IDEA 12

We must protect our personal anonymity.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 138, PARAGRAPH 1

PAPERBACK

PAGE 143, PARAGRAPH 2

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

Motivation for disclosing one's alcoholism is highly questionable. What is the real reason we tell anyone?

KEY IDEA 13

If the alcoholic needs hospital care, help the person get it by making the necessary arrangements.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 138, PARAGRAPH 6

PAPERBACK

PAGE 144, PARAGRAPH 1

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

We must remember there is a very real possibility of death occurring during unmonitored detoxing.

KEY IDEA 14

It is foolish to assume you can recover from alcoholism without a book which contains the recovery instructions.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 141, PARAGRAPH 1

PAPERBACK

PAGE 146, PARAGRAPH 1

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

What is the difference between "being in the program or being around the program"? Have we read the Big Book?

KEY IDEA 15

Approach it with honesty, humility, open-mindedness, willingness, and appreciation.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 141, PARAGRAPH 3

PAPERBACK

PAGE 146, PARAGRAPH 3

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

Discuss the idea of romancing the disease.

KEY IDEA 16

The principles of the Twelve Steps add up to a logical and livable way of life which will restore health, happiness, and sobriety to sick hopeless alcoholics.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 141, PARAGRAPH 4

PAPERBACK

PAGE 146, PARAGRAPH 4

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

The perception of living grows larger, richer, and more abundant.

KEY IDEA 17

Hundreds of thousands of members who have recovered from alcoholism give living proof that the AA program works for those who apply it.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 141, PARAGRAPH 5

PAPERBACK

PAGE 146, PARAGRAPH 5

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

Give personal examples to show that the program works.

KEY IDEA 18

Seek help from God as we understand Him to arrest our spiritual illness.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 142, PARAGRAPH 3

PAPERBACK

PAGE 147, PARAGRAPH 3

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

Give graphic examples of your Higher Power working in your life.

KEY IDEA 19

Rely upon the Twelve Steps to inspire us with worthy motives.

HARDCOVER

PAGE 142, PARAGRAPH 3

PAPERBACK

PAGE 147, PARAGRAPH 3

SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

Give examples of how the Twelve Steps move us into "A New Way of Life."

