

Big Book Prayer Index

This index is meant to be for reference only. There are numerous places in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous where it asks us to stop and pray.

Set-Aside Prayer

Dear God, please set aside anything I think I may know about myself, my disease, the Big Book, the 12 steps, the Program, the Fellowship, the people in it, all spiritual terms and especially you God; So that I may have an open mind and a new experience with all these things. Please help me to see Your Truth. Amen.

2nd Step Question – “Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?” – (p.47 We Agnostics)

Bill W’s bedside prayer – “There I humbly offered myself to God, as I then understood Him, to do with me as He would. I placed myself unreservedly under His care and direction. I admitted for the first time that of myself I was nothing; that without Him I was lost. I ruthlessly faced my sins and became willing to have my new-found Friend take them away, root and branch. I have not had a drink since.” – (p.13 Bill’s Story)

3rd Step Prayer – “God, I offer myself to Thee – to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!” – (p. 63 How It Works)

After Step Five Prayer – Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done. We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better. Taking this book down from our shelf we turn to the page (p. 59) which contains the twelve steps. Carefully reading the first five proposals we ask if we have omitted anything, for we are building an arch through which we shall walk a free man at last. Is our work solid so far? Are the stones properly in place? Have we skimmed on the cement put into the foundation? Have we tried to make mortar without sand?” – (p.75 Into Action)

7th Step Prayer – “When ready, we say something like this: ‘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 which 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.’” – (p.76 Into Action)

8th Step Prayer – “Before taking drastic action which might implicate other people, we secure their consent. If we have obtained permission, have consulted with others, asked God to help and the drastic step is indicated we must not shrink.” – (p.80 Into Action)

Bill W’s 8th Step prayer – “I was to test my thinking by the new God-consciousness within. Common sense would thus become uncommon sense. I was to sit quietly when in doubt asking only for direction and strength as He would have me. Never was I to pray for myself, except as my requests bore on my usefulness to others. The only might I expect to receive. But that would be in great measure.” – (p.13 Bill’s Story)

9th Step Prayer – “Yes, there is a long period of reconstruction ahead. We must take the lead. A remorseful mumbling that we are sorry won’t fill the bill at all. We ought to sit down with the family and frankly analyze the past as we now see it, being very careful not to criticize them. Their defects may be glaring, but the chances are that our own actions are partly responsible. So, we clean house with the family, asking each morning in meditation that our Creator show us the way of patience, tolerance, kindness and love.” – (p.83 Into Action)

10th Step Prayer – “We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past. We have entered the world of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness. This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime. 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. Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others is our code.” – (p.84 Into Action)

Step 11 (On Awakening) – “We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives. Under these conditions we can employ our mental faculties with assurance, for after all God gave us brains to use. Our thought-life will be placed on a much higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives.” – (p.86 Into Action)

Step 11 (Throughout the Day) – “In thinking about our day we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision.

We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while. What used to be the hunch, or the occasional inspiration gradually becomes a working part of the mind. Being still inexperienced and having just made conscious contact with God, it is not probable that we are going to be inspired at all times. We might pay for this presumption in all sorts of absurd actions and ideas. Nevertheless, we find that our thinking will, as time passes, be more and more on the plane of inspiration. We come to rely upon it." – (p.86-87 Into Action)

Step 11 (Evening Review Prayer) – "After making our review we ask God's forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken." – (p.86 Into Action)

Spiritual Maintenance Prayer – "Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God's will into all of our activities. 'How can I best serve Thee—Thy will (not mine) be done.' These are thoughts which must go with us constantly. We can exercise our will power along this line all we wish. It is the proper use of the will." – (p.85 Into Action)

Meditation Prayer – "We usually conclude the period of meditation with a prayer that we be shown all through the day what our next step is to be, that we be given whatever we need to take care of such problems. We ask especially for freedom from self-will and are careful to make no request for ourselves only. We may ask for ourselves, however, if others will be helped. We are careful never to pray for our own selfish ends. Many of us have wasted a lot of time doing that and it doesn't work. You can easily see why." – (p.87 Into Action)

Agitated or Doubtful Prayer – "As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day 'Thy will be done.' We are then in much less danger of excitement, fear, anger, worry, self-pity, or foolish decisions. We become much more efficient. We do not tire so easily, for we are not burning up energy foolishly as we did when we were trying to arrange life to suit ourselves.

It works – it really does.

We alcoholics are undisciplined. So we let god discipline us in the simple way we have just outlined." – (p.87-88 Into Action)

12th Step Prayer – “God will constantly disclose more to you and to us. Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come, if your own house is in order. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven’t got. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us.

Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

May God bless you and keep you – until then.” – (p.164 A Vision for You)

Anger Prayer – “This was our course: We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick. Though we did not like their symptoms and the way these disturbed us, they, like ourselves, were sick too. We asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend. When a person offended we said to ourselves, ‘This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done.’

We avoid retaliation or argument. We wouldn’t treat sick people that way. If we do, we destroy our chance of being helpful. We cannot be helpful to all people, but at least God will show us how to take a kindly and tolerant view of each and every one.” – (p.66-67 How It Works)

Fear Prayer – “We never apologize to anyone for depending upon our Creator. We can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. All men of faith have courage. They trust their God. We never apologize for God. Instead we let Him demonstrate, through us, what He can do. We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear.” – (p. 68 How It Works)

Sex Prayer – “In this way we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life. We subjected each relation to this test – was it selfish or not? We asked God to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them. We remembered always that our sex powers were God-given and therefore good, neither to be used lightly or selfishly nor to be despised and loathed.

Whatever our ideals turned out to be, we must be willing to grow toward it. We must be willing to make amends where we have done harm, provided that we do not bring about still more harm in so

doing. In other words, we treat sex as we would any other problem. In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come, if we want it.

We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing. If sex is very troublesome, we throw ourselves the harder into helping others. We think of their needs and work for them. It quiets the imperious urge, when to yield would mean heartache.” – (p. 69-70 How It Works)

Here are a few other prayers commonly used in our program and at our meetings:

St. Francis Prayer (12 x 12):

Lord, make me a channel of Thy peace. That where there is hatred, I may bring love; That where there is wrong, I may bring the Spirit of forgiveness; That where there is discord, I may bring harmony; That where there is error, I may bring truth; That where there is doubt, I may bring faith; That where there is despair, I may bring hope; That where there are shadows, I may bring light; That where there is sadness, I may bring joy. Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted; To understand, than to be understood; To love, than to be loved. For it is by self-forgetting that one finds. It is by forgiving that one is forgiven. It is by dying that one awakens to Eternal Life. Amen.

Serenity Prayer:

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. Living one day at a time; Enjoying one moment at a time; Accepting hardships as the Pathways to Peace; Taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; Trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His Will; That I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with Him Forever in the next. Amen.