

Before our Third Step Decision we use the Personal Stories as a tool to relate our experience to the experiences of alcoholics, this may help us to identify if we are one as well and to decide we want this 'thing'. If we are not as advanced in our alcoholic lives yet but identify much with the earlier symptoms of these alcoholics we may realise where we are heading if we keep on the way we are going. Leaving aside the differences, we look for the similarities and wherever we can identify with 'how they thought', 'how they felt' and 'how they drank', by asking ourselves the questions 'Did I think like this?' 'Did I feel like this?' and 'Did I drink like this?'. We consider our own experience. We may write this down in the margins or a notebook.

In this Appendix we have used Bill's Story, as it is the first story of many in the book, to illustrate how you can do this by extracting statements and turning them into questions to form your own story by describing your own experience. If you cannot relate your experience to this story, look for other stories or elements of stories you can relate to. This goes for stories you hear in meetings as well. We suggest only doing this for the part of the Stories you already have experience with, for example we use Bill's alcoholic life upto the moment he comes into contact with someone with a solution (pg.1-9) to relate to our experience of "how we were" until we found A.A.

After we've gone through the 12 Steps, we may continue to write our own Story of "what happened and how we are now". This story may help us and the next person we're working with, or another alcoholic who may read or hear it. We consider our Recovery. We have used Bill's Story as a format to give structure, however we'd like to make emphatic that this is just a tool, a tool of turning statements into questions to consider our own experience and a tool to give structure, we may apply this technique to any other stories which suit us best. This is not about Bill, but about our experience, Our Stories. As it is in the book Bill's Story, the author, speaking for A.A. carrying the message, opening the book, when we are working with others, it is not Bill's but our own Story which opens the Experience for the newcomer by one alcoholic talking to another, sharing experience, strength and hope. We start with Bill's Story on page 1.

**MY ALCOHOLIC LIFE \_ PG.1-9**

**READ 1:1 - 2:2**

**The discovery of alcohol...**

**1 : 1**

**L6.** When did I feel a part of life at last? In the midst of which excitement did I discover alcohol? *What was my discovery of alcohol like?*

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**L10.** When I was very lonely, did I turn to alcohol? *In which circumstances did I turn to alcohol? What did alcohol do for me?*

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**My dreams and aspirations...**

**1 : 3**

**L1.** Were there ominous<sup>1</sup> warnings which I failed to heed<sup>2</sup>? *Were there signs of my lack of control over alcohol? Which?*

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**L3.** Have I fancied<sup>3</sup> myself a leader? *Have I imagined how I would be successful in life? How?*

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**L4.** Have I imagined my talents would supply me a great future with the utmost assurance? *Have I imagined how my life would be? Did I have dreams and aspirations? Which?*

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<sup>1</sup> **Ominous** adjective; giving the worrying impression that something bad is going to happen; threateningly inauspicious.

<sup>2</sup> **'to heed'** verb; 'take notice of'

<sup>3</sup> **'Fancied'** verb, past participle; feel a desire or liking for.

2 : 1

L1. Did I study something, get a job somewhere, start a relationship? *What did I do?*

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L2. Did I have a drive<sup>4</sup> for success? *Where or in what was I trying to succeed?*

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L3. Did I feel I had to prove to the world I was important? *Why?*

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L8. Did I nearly fail at whatever I was trying to succeed in being a potential alcoholic at the time? *What is my experience?*

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L9. Was I ever too drunk to think or write at my exams? *(or whatever I was trying to succeed in)*

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L10. Though my drinking was not yet continuous, did it disturb my partner, family members, friends etc.? *Who did it disturb, what did they say?*

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L12. Did I tell them (and myself) that people of genius conceived their best projects when drunk; that the most majestic constructions of philosophic thought were so derived?<sup>5</sup> *What did I tell others and myself to justify my drinking? What was my excuse?*

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READ 2:2 - 3:3

***I have arrived, drinking takes on an important role in my life...***

2 : 2

L4. Have I forged a weapon out of an alloy<sup>6</sup> of drink and speculation<sup>7</sup> that turned on me and all but cut me to ribbons? *What was my alloy? What was my success but also almost my demise?*

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3 : Continuing 2:3

L3. Have I had some success<sup>8</sup>? *With what? What is my experience?*

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3 : 1

L5. Did that success make me feel like 'I had arrived'? *When did I experience that sensation of having arrived? What was that like?*

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<sup>4</sup> 'Drive' noun, similar; urge, desire need.

<sup>5</sup> IOW; My best thinking happens when I drink. *What did I tell myself?*

<sup>6</sup> 'Alloy' similar; mixture, mix, fusion, combination, etc.

<sup>7</sup> 'Speculation' noun; investment in stocks, property, etc. in the hope of gain but with the risk of loss, and also; the forming of a theory or conjecture without firm evidence, similar; theorizing, hypothesizing, guess, gambling. *Here referencing "having majestic ideas" of success while drunk. Have I come up with grand ideas when drunk and how far did I get with these ideas when sober? Has self-reliance (relying on my own power) failed to get me to where I wanted to be with the idea/theory/in life?*

<sup>8</sup> 'Success' here; success with my 'majestic' ideas? Have I been able to maintain that success?

L4. Did alcohol take an important<sup>9</sup> and exhilarating<sup>10</sup> part in my life? *What is my experience?*

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L9. Did I make a host of fair-weather friends<sup>11</sup>? *What is my experience?*

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***Drinking assumes more serious proportions...***

**3 : 2**

L1. Did my drinking assume more serious proportions? Did it continue all day and almost every night? *How did my drinking assume more serious proportions?*

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L2. Did remonstrances<sup>12</sup> of my friends terminate in a row<sup>13</sup>? Did I become a lone wolf<sup>14</sup>? *Did people warn me, commented on or complained about my drinking and did I start to avoid them? Did they stand in the way of my drinking? What is my experience?*

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L4. Were there many unhappy scenes at home?<sup>15</sup> *What is my experience, at home, with family, with partners, friends, which unhappy scenes?*

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**READ 3:3 - 4:2**

***I start over...***

**3 : 3**

L1. Did I ever start over? *Did I change environment, friends, partner, job, etc. and start anew?*

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L3. Did liquor catch up with me? *What happened?*

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L4. Did I begin to be jittery<sup>16</sup> in the morning? *Did I start to have physical consequences?*

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L5. Did I at some point drink every day and every night? *How frequent did my drinking become? How was that?*

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**4 : 1**

L7. Have I ever felt I was finished?<sup>17</sup> *What is my experience? How did I feel?*

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<sup>9</sup> 'Important' *adjective*; of great significance or value.

<sup>10</sup> 'Exhilarating' *adjective*; making one feel very happy, animated, or elated; thrilling.

<sup>11</sup> 'Fair weather friend', *noun*; a person whose friendship cannot be relied on in times of difficulty.

<sup>12</sup> 'Remonstrance', *noun*; a forcefully reproachful protest.

<sup>13</sup> 'Row', *noun*; a noisy acrimonious quarrel, also; a serious dispute.

<sup>14</sup> 'Lone wolf', *noun*; a very independent or solitary person.

<sup>15</sup> 'Home' *here*; with my partner and/or family members. What were these unhappy scenes like?

<sup>16</sup> 'Jittery' *adjective*; nervous or unable to relax.

<sup>17</sup> 'Being finished' *phrase, similar*; to be doomed, lost, ruined. *What did that feel like?*

**L9.** Did the thought of suicide disgust me? *Have I thought of taking my own life? Did I see no other way out? What were my thoughts when I experienced total failure?*

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**L10.** Did I go back to the bar *or wherever I did my drinking? Instead of taking my own life, what did I do?*

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**L12.** When I felt I was finished, done, and I drank, did a feeling of fierce determination to win come back? *What happened when I drank? Did I come up with another way out? What was it?*

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**READ 4:2 - 5:1**

***I got another chance...***

**4 : 2**

**L2.** Did I ever depend on a generous friend? *Did they help me out? What is my exp.?*

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**L4.** Did I ever feel like Napoleon returning from Elba? Thinking 'No St-Helena for me?'<sup>18</sup> *Did I feel like I escaped and was free again, convinced I wasn't ever going back to how I was?*

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*What did I escape from? Was I convinced I'd learned my lesson?*

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**L5.** Did drinking catch up with me again? Did a friend ever have to let me go? *What happened?*

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**4 : 3**

**L3.** Where did I go? *What did I do?*

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**5 : Continuing 4:3**

**L1.** Did I become an unwelcome hanger on at my job, at the bar, at friends? *Did people start to avoid me, not wanting me around, not inviting me, did they give up on me?*

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**READ 5:1 - 5:4**

***Alcohol became a necessity...***

**5 : 1**

**L1.** Did alcohol cease to be a luxury; did it become a necessity? *When, how was this?*

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**L2.** Did drinking get to be routine? *What did my routine look like?*

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<sup>18</sup> Napoleon, emperor of France, was exiled to an island called Elba, he escaped in 1815. The same year he was imprisoned on the island St-Helena, where he died in six years later. **'Return from Elba'**; Back from imprisonment, freedom. **'No St-Helena'**; not failing, not losing control.

L5. Did I begin to awaken early in the morning shaking? *How did I feel in the morning?*

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L8. Was drink required if I were to eat anything? *Did I need to drink to function? Eat, sleep, work, etc.? What did I need drink for?*

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L9. Were there periods of sobriety? Did these make me think that I could still control the situation? *What is my experience?*

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5 : 2

L1. Did things gradually get worse? *How did things get gradually worse?*

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5 : 3

L1. Did I ever get a new promising opportunity or chance somehow, then go on a prodigious<sup>19</sup> bender, and the chance vanished? *What is my experience?*

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READ 5:4 - 5:6

***I start to feel this has to stop...***

5 : 4

L1. Did I ever feel this had to stop?

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L2. Did I see I could not take so much as one drink? *What was my experience every time I took a drink? Did I realise my predicament?*

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L2. Did I believe I was through forever? *Did I believe I had reached my low point, I was finished with this drinking business?*

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L3. Had I before written lots of sweet promises, but was it observed that this time I meant business? *Did others believe me?*

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L5. Did I believe I meant business?

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5 : 5

L1. Did I shortly after having had high resolve<sup>20</sup> end up drunk? *What happened?*

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L2. Had there been any fight<sup>21</sup>? *What had been my defense?*

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<sup>19</sup>'Prodigious' *adjective*; remarkably or impressively great in extent, size, or degree.

<sup>20</sup>'Resolve' *noun*; firm determination to do something.

<sup>21</sup>'Fight' *noun*; struggle to overcome, eliminate, or prevent.

L3. Did I simply not know, where my high resolve had been?

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L3. Had it even come to mind? *What had I been thinking?*

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L4. Had a drink come my way, and I had taken it? *What had happened?*

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L5. Did I begin to wonder if I was crazy, for such an appalling<sup>22</sup> lack of perspective<sup>23</sup> seemed near being just that? *What did I think was wrong with me? Was I baffled?*

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**READ 5:6 - 6:2**

***I tried again...***

**5 : 6**

L1. Renewing my resolve, did I try again? *Did I try again to stop or manage my drinking?*

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**6 : Continuing 5:6**

L1. Did, after some time, confidence<sup>24</sup> begin to be replaced by cocksureness<sup>25</sup>? *Did I after a while of not drinking start to think I was perhaps making to big of a deal out of it? What did I start to think after a while?*

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L2. Did I believe I could laugh at bars? Did I believe now I had what it takes? *What did I start to believe?*

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L4. Did I one day, find myself drinking again, asking myself how it happened? *How was I talking to myself, what did I say?*

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L6. Did I tell myself I would manage better next time, but that I might as well get good and drunk then? And did I? *What was I telling myself, what was my conclusion?*

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***I began to lose hope...***

**6 : 1**

L1. Do I remember the remorse<sup>26</sup>, horror<sup>27</sup> and hopelessness<sup>28</sup> of the next morning? *How did I feel the morning after having succumbed to the desire?*

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L2. Was the courage to do battle<sup>29</sup> there? *Had I begun to lose hope?*

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<sup>22</sup> 'Appalling' adjective; very bad; awful.

<sup>23</sup> 'Perspective' noun; true understanding of the relative importance of things; a sense of proportion.

<sup>24</sup> 'Confidence' noun; a feeling of self-assurance arising from an appreciation of one's own abilities or qualities.

<sup>25</sup> 'Cocksureness' noun; feeling perfect assurance sometimes on inadequate grounds, and also; marked by overconfidence or presumptuousness : cocky,

<sup>26</sup> 'Remorse' noun; deep regret or guilt for a wrong committed.

<sup>27</sup> 'Horror' noun; an intense feeling of fear, shock, or disgust.

<sup>28</sup> 'Hopelessness' noun; a feeling or state of despair; lack of hope.

<sup>29</sup> 'Battle' noun; a lengthy and difficult conflict or struggle, and also 'Battle' verb; struggle tenaciously to achieve or resist something.

**L3.** Did my brain race uncontrollably and was there a sense of impending<sup>30</sup> calamity<sup>31</sup>? *Did I become anxious, was there an underlying sense of looming disaster, did I feel this was not going to end well? How did I start to feel?*

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**L8.** Did I drink to still my writhing<sup>32</sup> nerves? *Did I drink to medicate my nerves, my anxiety? Did I drink to cope?*

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**L10.** Did I feel I had gone to hell<sup>33</sup>? *Did I feel ruined, useless, finished? How did I feel?*

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**L11.** Did I think I would not recover? *Did I lose any hope?*

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**L11.** Have I ever considered killing myself but decided no—not now?<sup>34</sup> *What is my experience and what did I do?*

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**L12.** When a mental fog<sup>35</sup> settled down, would I drink to fix that? *Did I drink to clear my mind, wake up?*

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**L13.** Did I drink into oblivion<sup>36</sup>? *What is my experience?*

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**READ** 6:2 - 7:1

**6 : 2**

***The agony...***

**L1.** How long did I endure this agony for?

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**L2.** Did I sometimes steal from my loved ones when the terror<sup>37</sup> and madness<sup>38</sup> were on me? *What is my experience? Did I steal to enable my drinking?*

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**L4.** Have I played with the idea of killing myself, cursing myself for a weakling<sup>39</sup>? *What is my experience? What was I telling myself? Did I not see any other way out?*

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<sup>30</sup> **'Impending'** *verb*; be about to happen, and also; (of something bad) be looming.

<sup>31</sup> **'Calamity'** *noun*; an event causing great and often sudden damage or distress; a disaster.

<sup>32</sup> **'Writhing'** *adjective*; making twisting, squirming movements or contortions of the body.

<sup>33</sup> **'Gone to hell'** *verb passed participle*; To go out the window; be ruined; be now useless.

<sup>34</sup> *Did I keep that option open for later?*

<sup>35</sup> **'Mental fog'**; Clouding of consciousness (also known as brain fog or mental fog) is when a person is slightly less wakeful or aware than normal. They are not as aware of time or their surroundings and find it difficult to pay attention. People describe this subjective sensation as their mind being "foggy".

<sup>36</sup> **'Oblivion'** *noun*; the state of being unaware or unconscious of what is happening around one.

<sup>37</sup> **'Terror'** *noun*; extreme fear.

<sup>38</sup> **'Madness'** *noun*; a state of wild or chaotic activity.

<sup>39</sup> **'Weakling'** *noun*; an ineffectual or cowardly person.

**L8.** Did I seek to escape<sup>40</sup>? *Did I change environment, how did I seek to escape, distract from reality?*

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**L9.** Has there been a moment when the physical and mental torture<sup>41</sup> was so hellish I feared I would take my own life? How did my physical and mental torture feel? *What did I see as my only way out?*

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**L12.** Has a doctor ever prescribed me a sedative? *Was I prescribed medication?*

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**7 : Continuing 6:2**

**L1.** Did I take both sedatives and alcohol? *Did medication relieve me from the desire to drink or did I drink nonetheless, on top of medication? What is my experience?*

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*What did I take in addition to alcohol when alcohol was not enough anymore?*

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**L2.** Did this combination soon land me on the rocks<sup>42</sup>? *Where did this combination get me?*

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**L3.** Did people fear for my sanity? Did I? *Did people worry for my safety? Did I?*

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**READ 7:1 - 7:4**

***The search for a solution...***

**7 : 1**

**L1.** Have I been in a hospital?<sup>43</sup> *Have I been in hospital, rehab, detox, clinic, etc? Where have I been?*

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**L4.** Have I received treatment? Did my brain clear? *Which treatment? What was the effect?*

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**L5.** Did exercise help much? *Have I tried exercise? Could exercise keep me sober?*

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**L7.** Did someone explain and do I believe that, though certainly selfish and foolish, I have been seriously ill, bodily and mentally? *Considering the chapter The Doctor's Opinion, do I believe this to be an illness from which I suffer?*

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<sup>40</sup> 'Escape' *noun*; an act of breaking free from confinement or control, and also; a form of temporary distraction from reality or routine.

<sup>41</sup> 'Torture' *noun*; great physical or mental suffering.

<sup>42</sup> 'on the rocks' *idiom*; In a state of difficulty, destruction, or ruin. *What did that look like for me?*

<sup>43</sup> 'Hospital' *here also*; rehab hospital, detox, clinic, institution, etc.

7 : 2

L1. Am I relieved somewhat to learn from others that in alcoholics the will is amazingly weakened when it comes to combating<sup>44</sup> liquor, though it often remains strong in other respects? *Am I relieved that being an alcoholic is not a sign of weakness?*

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L4. Does this explain my incredible behavior in the face of a desperate desire to stop?

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L5. Have I believed that with understanding myself, I could fare forth<sup>45</sup> in high hope?

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L6. Have I believed that self-knowledge<sup>46</sup> was surely the answer? *Do I believe that now?*

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7 : 3

L1. Has self-knowledge ever kept me from drinking or was there always the day that I drank once more? *Has anything been able to keep me sober? What is my experience?*

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L2. Did my moral and bodily health decline? *How did I feel mentally and bodily? How was my health?*

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L3. After a time, did I return to hospital? *Did I return to hospital, rehab, retreat, other?*

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L4. Did it seem to me I was finished, the curtain<sup>47</sup>? *What is my experience? What felt like my curtain?*

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L6. Was I ever informed that alcoholism would end with death, possibly by heart failure during delirium tremens<sup>48</sup>, or by developing a wet brain<sup>49</sup>? *Am I aware of the consequences of alcoholism?*

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L8. Do I realise that alcoholics end with loved one(s) giving them over to the undertaker or the asylum? *Do I realise that if I'm a chronic alcoholic without a solution eventually I may end up dead or insane?*

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<sup>44</sup> 'Combating' verb; take action to reduce or prevent (something bad or undesirable).

<sup>45</sup> 'Fare' verb; travel, 'forth' adverb; out and away from a starting point, and also; onwards in time.

<sup>46</sup> 'Self-knowledge' noun; understanding of oneself or one's own motives or character.

<sup>47</sup> 'Curtain' noun; a raising or lowering of the curtain at the beginning or end of an act or scene (in this case the 'end'), and also; a disastrous outcome.

<sup>48</sup> 'Delirium Tremens' (DT) noun; a psychotic condition typical of withdrawal in chronic alcoholics, involving tremors, hallucinations, anxiety, and disorientation.

<sup>49</sup> 'Wet brain' is a term used to describe Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome – a type of brain damage that is caused by alcohol abuse.

**READ 7:4 - 8:2**

**The defeat...**

**7 : 4**

**L1.** Did they need not tell me? Did I know, and almost welcome the idea? *Did I, at some point, almost welcome the idea of permanent oblivion by death or insanity, did it seem better than the mental and physical torture of my alcoholic life? Did I accept my doom?*

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**L2.** Was it a devastating blow to my pride<sup>50</sup>? *Did I feel as if I had lost the fight, I was mastered?*

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**8 : Continuing 7:4**

**L1.** Had I thought so well of myself and my abilities, my capacity to surmount<sup>51</sup> obstacles, but knew I was cornered<sup>52</sup> at last? *Have I thought like this? What did I know at some point?*

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**L3.** Have I felt like I was to plunge<sup>53</sup> into the dark, joining the endless procession<sup>54</sup> of sots<sup>55</sup> who had gone on before? *To death or insanity? Have I ever surrendered to the idea that the game was up, was there no more hope?*

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**L5.** Have I thought of my loved ones, remembered much happiness after all, asked myself what I would not give to make things right, but believed that was nothing left to do? *What is my experience?*

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**8 : 1**

**L1.** Have I found loneliness and despair in that<sup>56</sup> morass<sup>57</sup> of self-pity? *How did I feel?*

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**L2.** Did quicksand<sup>58</sup> stretch all around me in all directions?<sup>59</sup> *Did I see no more way out?*

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**L3.** Had I met my match<sup>60</sup>?

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**L4.** Had I been overwhelmed<sup>61</sup>? *How did I feel? Was I defeated?*

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*Was alcohol my master<sup>62</sup>? Was I overcome?*

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<sup>50</sup> 'Pride' *noun*; consciousness of one's own dignity.

<sup>51</sup> 'Surmount' *verb*; overcome

<sup>52</sup> 'Cornered' *verb*; forced into a place or situation from which it is hard to escape.

<sup>53</sup> 'Plunge' *verb*; fall suddenly and uncontrollably.

<sup>54</sup> 'Procession' *noun*; a relentless succession of people or things.

<sup>55</sup> 'Sot' *noun*; a habitual drunkard.

<sup>56</sup> 'That' refers to the former paragraph, that realisation of being hopeless, finished, done.

<sup>57</sup> 'Morass' *noun*; a complicated or confused situation, *but also*; an area of muddy or boggy ground.

<sup>58</sup> 'Quicksand' *noun*; loose wet sand that yields easily to pressure and sucks in anything resting on or falling into it, and also; a bad or dangerous situation from which it is hard to escape.

<sup>59</sup> 'Did I have a way out?'

<sup>60</sup> 'To meet ones match.' *phrase*. If you **meet your match**, you find that you are competing or fighting against someone who you cannot beat because they are as good as you, or better than you.

<sup>61</sup> 'Overwhelm' *verb*; defeat completely.

<sup>62</sup> 'Master' (*noun*) *similar*; director, principal, employer, manager, etc. and also; a person who has complete control of something.

**The last debauch...**

**8 : 2**

**L1.** Did I feel like a broken person, trembling? *How have I felt?*

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**L2.** Did fear keep me sober for a bit? *Has fear ever kept me from drinking?*

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**L3.** Did the insidious<sup>63</sup> insanity<sup>64</sup> of that first drink come, and was I off again? *Did I drink again? What is my experience?*

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**L4.** Did everyone become resigned<sup>65</sup> to the certainty that I would have to be shut up somewhere, or would stumble along to a miserable end? *Did others see there was no hope for me, had they given up?*

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**L7.** Do I remember my last debauch<sup>66</sup>? *What did my last drinking look like?*

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**8 : 3**

**L2.** Did I sit drinking, near the end of my bleak November? *Bill was done and had become resigned to stumble along to a miserable end, drinking, this is his bleak November; What is my bleak November?*

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**L3.** Did it satisfy me to reflect that there was enough alcohol concealed about the house? *Did I ever hide alcohol to make sure there was enough? What is my experience?*

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**L5.** Have I wondered whether I dared hide alcohol near the head of my bed? *Did I spend time thinking about how and where to hide my drink so as to be assured to have enough?*

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**L6.** Did I need to drink before daylight? *Did I wake up at night or early morning and needed to drink? How early in the day was the need on me? What is my experience?*

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**End of My Alcoholic Life**

*In the next part Bill describes his first encounter with a recovered alcoholic, an old school friend, Ebby, who carried the Oxford Group message of recovery to him, we use the description of this encounter to look at our first encounter with Alcoholics Anonymous and write about our own experience.*

**CONTINUE** with **My Recovery** on the next pages...

<sup>63</sup> 'Insidious' adjective; proceeding in a gradual, subtle way, but with very harmful effects.

<sup>64</sup> 'Insanity' noun; the state of being seriously mentally ill; madness, and also; extreme foolishness or irrationality.

<sup>65</sup> 'Resigned' adjective; having accepted something unpleasant that one cannot do anything about.

<sup>66</sup> 'Debauch' noun; a bout of excessive indulgence in sex, alcohol, or drugs.

## MY RECOVERY \_

Here starts the story of the meeting between Bill and his old school friend and drinking companion Ebby T. who, now sober, carried his message of recovery to Bill. One alcoholic carrying the message to another. It's also common for us to carry the A.A. message of recovery at meetings and often a meeting is our first encounter with A.A. At this meeting we may encounter another alcoholic who has recovered from alcoholism with whom we may have a similar experience. We've found it beneficial to relate this part of the story to our own experience of our encounter with a recovered alcoholic.

Our alcoholic life has gotten us to A.A. or A.A. to us. Now we look at what happened. We use the rest of the chapter to look back on our experience, to write our own Story, which we may use to carry our message to the new person.

### READ 8:4 - 9:3

#### **My first encounter with Alcoholics Anonymous...**

#### **9 : Continuing 8:4**

**L1.** Were they<sup>67</sup> sober? How were they?

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**L3.** Was I amazed? Was I amazed by hearing some of the stories, how they have managed to stay sober?

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**L4.** Did I wonder<sup>68</sup> how they have escaped<sup>69</sup>? Was I curious?

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**L9.** Was hearing their message like an oasis<sup>70</sup> in a dreary<sup>71</sup> desert<sup>72</sup> of futility<sup>73</sup>? How was it to realise I'm not alone, that there is a solution that works? How was it to hear their message?

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#### **9 : 1**

**L1.** Were they fresh-skinned and glowing? How were they? What was my experience?

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**L2.** Was there something about their eyes? What was it?

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**L3.** Were they inexplicably different? How were they different?

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**L3.** What had happened? What had happened to them?

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<sup>67</sup> "They": 'The people at the meeting, the person helping me?'

<sup>68</sup> 'Wonder' verb; desire to know something; feel curious, and also; feel admiration and amazement; marvel.

<sup>69</sup> 'Escape' verb; break free from confinement or control, and also; succeed in avoiding or eluding something dangerous or unpleasant.

<sup>70</sup> 'Oasis' noun; a pleasant or peaceful area or period in the midst of a difficult or hectic place or situation.

<sup>71</sup> 'Dreary' adjective; depressingly dull and bleak or repetitive.

<sup>72</sup> 'Desert' noun; a situation or place considered dull and uninteresting.

<sup>73</sup> 'Futility' noun; pointlessness or uselessness.

L2. Was I curious, did I wonder what had gotten into them?<sup>74</sup>

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L3. Were they themselves<sup>75</sup>? *Not trying to be someone they're not?*

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*Ebby's message was the message of the Oxford Group<sup>76</sup>, a non-denominational religious organisation, before the start of A.A. See the link in the footnote for more information.*

*"A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, organisation or institution, our primary purpose is to stay sober and to help other alcoholics achieve sobriety." The A.A. Preamble.*

*"We represent no particular faith or denomination. We are dealing only with general principles common to most spiritual paths." (Working With Others, pg.93:2)*

*We use the word "spiritual" instead of "religious".*

*'Spiritual' adjective; relating to or affecting the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things. Similar; non-material, inner, psychic, psychological.*

**READ 9:3 - 10:1**

**A simple spiritual idea and a practical program of action...**

L2. Did they say they've got religion<sup>77</sup>? *What did they say about spiritual matters?*

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L1. Was I aghast<sup>78</sup>? *What was my reaction when I heard the solution for alcoholism in A.A. is worked out on the spiritual as well as the altruistic plane?*

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L2. Did I suspect<sup>79</sup> they were a little cracked<sup>80</sup> about spirituality? *What did I suspect?*

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L3. Did they talk about a simple spiritual<sup>81</sup> idea<sup>82</sup> and a practical program of action<sup>83</sup>?

*Did they make it emphatic that I didn't have to agree with another's conception of a Power greater than ourselves, that I could choose any conception I like, provided it made sense to me? That the main thing was that I become willing to believe in a Power greater than myself and live by spiritual principles? (Working With Others, pg.93)  
What did they talk about?*

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<sup>74</sup> "Curious to know how they got well." (Working With Others, pg.93)

<sup>75</sup> 'Be yourself' phrase; to behave in a natural way, rather than trying to pretend to be different.

<sup>76</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oxford\\_Group](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oxford_Group)

<sup>77</sup> 'get religion' phrase; be converted to religious belief and practices. Also, noun; a pursuit or interest followed with great devotion. Here used as similar; Faith, belief.

<sup>78</sup> 'Aghast' adjective; similar; appalled, astounded, amazed, shocked,

<sup>79</sup> 'Suspect' verb; have an idea or impression of the existence, presence, or truth of (something) without certain proof.

<sup>80</sup> 'Cracked' adjective; crazy; insane.

<sup>81</sup> 'Religious' adjective; forming part of someone's faith in a divine being.

<sup>82</sup> 'Idea' noun; a thought or suggestion as to a possible course of action.

<sup>83</sup> 'Action' noun; the process of doing something, typically to achieve an aim. Similar; steps, work, power, etc.

*Have they talked about these spiritual principles being the twelve Steps of A.A. being the practical program of action? Have they explained how they made a self-appraisal, how they straightened out their past and why they were endeavoring to be helpful to me? (Working With Others, pg.94:1)What did they talk about?*

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**L5.** Was the result self-evident<sup>84</sup>? *Were they living proof that it works?*

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**9 : 6**

**L1.** Were they simply passing on their experience<sup>85</sup> along to me—did I care to have it?

*Had they made it clear and did I realise that their attempt to pass this on to me played a vital part in their own recovery? Was it plain to me that I was under no obligation to them, that they hoped only that I would try to help other alcoholics when I escape my own difficulties? Did they suggest how important it was that I'd place the welfare of other people ahead of my own? Was it clear to me that I was under no pressure, that I needn't see them again if I didn't want to? (Working With Others, pg.94:1)*

*What were they passing on? Did I want it?*

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**10 : Continuing 9:6**

**L1.** Was I shocked<sup>86</sup>, but interested? *What was my reaction?*

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**L2.** Did I have to be interested, for was I hopeless?*Was there any other hope for me? How did I feel? Did I have a better idea?*

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### **The Simple Spiritual Idea**

*In the following paragraphs Bill writes about his own musings about his specific and personal spiritual ideas and experiences (of his past), he grew up in a dominantly Christian-Judaic society before the 1900's and the time of this writing takes place in the 1930's in the U.S. his ideas and the language he uses may reflect that. We do not imply you have to identify with any of that, we simply use these paragraphs as a tool to look at our own ideas and ponderings when we were figuring out our position concerning the spiritual solution presented to us.*

**READ 10:1 - 11:3**

***What was I willing to believe and what wasn't I willing to believe...***

**10 : 1**

**L5.** Did I have good natured contempt<sup>87</sup> of some *religious* folk and their doing? *What was my opinion of some religious people and their doing?*

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<sup>84</sup> **'Self-evident'** *adjective*; not needing to be demonstrated or explained; obvious.

<sup>85</sup> **'Experience'** *noun*; the knowledge or skill acquired by a period of practical experience of something.

<sup>86</sup> 'Shocked' see 'Aghast' Pg.9:4 L.1

<sup>87</sup> **'Good-natured'** *adjective*; kind, friendly, and patient. **'Contempt'** *noun*; the feeling that a person or a thing is worthless or beneath consideration.

L7. *What did I think about...* “that the spheres really had their music”<sup>88</sup>; but denying<sup>89</sup> organised religion’s right to tell me how I must *listen*<sup>90</sup>?

*Did I have certain spiritual ideas but refused anyone telling me what and how to believe?  
What were these ideas?*

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10 : 3

L1. Had I always believed in a Power<sup>91</sup> greater than myself? *What had I always believed?*

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L2. Had I often pondered<sup>92</sup> these things? *Have I been interested in spiritual concepts? Which things have I contemplated?*

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L3. Was I an atheist<sup>93</sup>? *What did I believe about the concept of God?*

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L4. Did I have blind faith<sup>94</sup> in the proposition that this universe originates in a cipher<sup>95</sup> and aimlessly<sup>96</sup> rushes nowhere? *What did I believe about the universe?*

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L5. Did science and my intellect<sup>97</sup> suggest vast laws and forces at work? *What did my power of reason suggest, what could my mind grasp? What did my intellectual heroes suggest?*

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L8. Despite contrary<sup>98</sup> indications<sup>99</sup>, did I believe<sup>100</sup> that a mighty purpose and rhythm<sup>101</sup> underlies all? *What did I believe was underneath these vast laws and forces?*

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L9. *Could there be so much precise and immutable*<sup>102</sup> law, and no intelligence<sup>103</sup>? *What did I think of the idea of an underlying intelligence?*

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<sup>88</sup> The musica universalis (literally universal music), also called music of the spheres or **harmony** of the spheres, is an ancient philosophical concept that regards proportions in the movements of celestial bodies—the Sun, Moon, and planets—as a form of music. This “music” is not thought to be audible, but rather a harmonic, mathematical or religious concept.

<sup>89</sup> **‘Deny’** verb; refuse to give (something requested or desired) to (someone).

<sup>90</sup> **‘Listen’** to the spheres as in **‘Believe’**.

<sup>91</sup> **‘Power’** noun; in religion; a supernatural being, deity, or force, *but also*; the ability or capacity to do something or act in a particular way. Similar; **‘ability’** noun; possession of the means or skill to do something., **‘potential’** noun; latent qualities or abilities that may be developed and lead to future success or usefulness., **‘faculty’** noun; an inherent mental or physical power.

<sup>92</sup> **‘Ponder’** verb; think about (something) carefully, especially before making a decision or reaching a conclusion.

<sup>93</sup> **‘Atheist’** noun; a person who disbelieves or lacks belief in the existence of God or gods.

<sup>94</sup> **‘Blind faith’** is having complete confidence in someone or something without any reason to do so.

<sup>95</sup> **‘Cipher’** noun; a secret or disguised way of writing; a code.

<sup>96</sup> **‘Aimlessly’** adjective; without purpose or direction.

<sup>97</sup> **‘Intellect’** noun; the faculty of reasoning and understanding objectively, especially with regard to abstract matters, *and also*; a person’s mental powers.

<sup>98</sup> **‘Contrary’** adjective; opposite in nature, direction, or meaning.

<sup>99</sup> **‘Indication’** noun; a sign or piece of information that indicates something.

<sup>100</sup> **‘Little doubt’**; The phrase “There is **little doubt** that” means there isn’t much room for **doubt**.

<sup>101</sup> **‘Rhythm’** noun; similar; pattern, flow.

<sup>102</sup> **‘Immutable’** adjective; unchanging over time or unable to be changed.

<sup>103</sup> **‘Intelligence’** noun; the ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills. Similar; **‘Mind’** noun; the faculty of consciousness and thought.

**‘Consciousness’** noun; the fact of awareness by the mind of itself and the world.

**L10.** What did I believe about a Spirit<sup>104</sup> of the Universe<sup>105</sup>, that knows neither time nor limitation<sup>106</sup>? *What did I believe? How would I have described such a life force?*

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**10 : 4**

**L1.** With ministers and the world's religions, did I part right there? *What did I think of the world's religions and their representatives?*

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**L2.** When people talked of a God personal to me<sup>107</sup>, who is love, superhuman strength and direction, did I become irritated and did my mind snap shut against such a theory? *What was my reaction to such theories? What did I believe about the concept of a personal God?*

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**11 : 1**

**L3.** For myself, had I adopted those parts of *spiritual teachings and ideas* which seemed convenient and not too difficult; did I disregard the rest? *Had I? Did I do that? Did I see I could do that, take bits and pieces from established religions, spiritual movements and ideas that I am willing to believe, make them my own, and disregard the rest, shape my own personal "religion"?*

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**11 : 2**

**L1.** Did the wars which have been fought, the burnings and chicanery (deceit) that religious dispute facilitated, *bother me? What did I think of the history of religious disputes in the world?*

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**L3.** Did I honestly doubt whether, on balance, the religions of mankind had done any good? *What did I think, on balance, of the religions of mankind?*

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**L4.** Judging from what I had seen, did I believe the power of a *so-called* God in human affairs negligible<sup>108</sup>, the Brotherhood of Man<sup>109</sup> a grim jest<sup>110</sup>? *What was my conclusion judging on what I had seen in the world and my life?*

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**READ 11:3 - 12:2**

***My friend's experience...*** 'friend' refers to the person helping you.

**11 : 3**

**L1.** Had my friends (A.A.) made the point-blank declaration that Power (Faith) had done for them what they could not do for themselves? *Like for example quitting drinking...relief from fear, having a great life. Was I willing to believe this?*

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<sup>104</sup> 'Spirit' *noun*; similar; Soul, life force.

<sup>105</sup> 'Universe' *noun*; all existing matter and space considered as a whole; the cosmos, *and also*; a particular sphere of activity or experience.

<sup>106</sup> 'Limitation' *noun*; a condition of limited ability; a defect or failing. *Similar*; imperfection, defect, shortcoming.

<sup>107</sup> 'God personal to me'; a personal god is a deity who can be related to as a person instead of as an impersonal force, such as the Absolute, "the All", or the "Ground of Being". ... Personal relationships with God may be described in the same ways as human relationships, such as a Father, as in Christianity, or a Friend as in Sufism.

<sup>108</sup> 'Negligible' *adjective*; so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering; insignificant.

<sup>109</sup> 'Brotherhood of Man'; the belief, feeling, or hope that all men should regard and treat one another as brothers.

<sup>110</sup> 'Grim' *adjective*; very serious or gloomy. 'Jest' *noun*; a thing said or done for amusement; a joke.

**L3.** Had their human will<sup>111</sup> failed? *Have they told me about the complete failure of their human will power when it comes to the first drink? Their will power was just not there when it was most needed? How did I identify with that?*

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Did doctors pronounce them incurable? *(the Doctor's Opinion)*  
*What did they share about their experience with medical people? How did I identify with that?*

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Was society about to lock them up? *What did they share about their experience with society, did society have a solution? How did I identify with that?*

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**L5.** Had they admitted complete defeat? *Had they given up on ever regaining a life? How did I identify with that?*

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**L6.** Then had they been raised from the dead, suddenly taken from the scrap heap, to a level of life better than the best they have ever known? *Have they shared their experience? How did I feel?*

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**11 : 4**

**L1.** Had there been no more power in them *(at their rock bottom)* than there was in me at *my rock bottom*; and was that none at all? *What did they share and how did I identify?*

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**L5.** *Did I become willing to have an open mind about there being something at work in a human heart which can do the impossible? Did I begin to have an open mind about spiritual matters seeing that it worked in them, and they were just like me?*

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**L7.** Were my ideas about miracles<sup>112</sup> drastically<sup>113</sup> revised<sup>114</sup>? *Was it a miracle for a hopeless alcoholic, given up on by everyone including themselves, to recover from it? What were my ideas? Was I amazed? Did I begin to have an open mind?*

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**L8.** Did I believe I didn't have to mind the musty<sup>115</sup> past; there was a miracle right there? *How did I feel seeing there was a solution to the alcoholic problem?*

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**L9.** Did they shout great tidings<sup>116</sup>? *Was this great news, did these millions of recovered alcoholics all over the world give hope, for me? Did I regain a bit of hope?*

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<sup>111</sup> 'Will' noun: 'the faculty by which a person decides on and initiates action'.

<sup>112</sup> 'Miracles' noun; an exceptional product or achievement, or an outstanding example of something, and also; a remarkable event or development that brings very welcome consequences. 'Miracle' here; keep an alcoholic sober and happy.

<sup>113</sup> 'Drastically' adverb; extremely; very.

<sup>114</sup> 'Revised' adjective; having been reconsidered and amended.

<sup>115</sup> 'Musty' adjective; lacking freshness or vitality; old-fashioned. *Similar*; unoriginal, uninspired, unimaginative.

<sup>116</sup> 'Tidings' noun, *similar*; news, information, intelligence, advise.

11 : 5

L1. Did I see that my friends were much more than inwardly<sup>117</sup> reorganized? *What was it about them?*

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12 : Continuing 11:5

L1. Were they on a different footing<sup>118</sup>? *What was it about them?*

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L2. Had their roots<sup>119</sup> grasped a new soil? *Did they seem to have recreated their lives?*

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12 : 1

L1. Despite the living example of my new friends, did there remain in me vestiges<sup>120</sup> of my old prejudice<sup>121</sup>? *What was my old prejudice? What was my old idea? What held me back?*

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L2. Did the word God arouse<sup>122</sup> in me a certain antipathy<sup>123</sup>? *What was it about the word God that I had difficulty with?*

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*Did they make emphatic I did not have to use this word, that the main thing was that I became willing to believe in a Power greater than myself and live by spiritual principles?*

L3. When the thought was expressed that there might be a God personal to me, was this feeling intensified? *If anyone is telling me there might be a God such or so, how did I react? Did I realise that A.A. does not wish to engage in such controversy, that it is entirely up to me?*

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L4. Did I not like the idea? *Which idea did I not like?*

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L5. Could I go for such conceptions as Creative Intelligence, Universal Mind or Spirit of Nature, but did I resist the thought of a Czar of the Heavens, however loving His sway might be? *How did I feel about these things? What conceptions could I go for at that time, and how did I call these ideas?*

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*Did my friends make sure not to raise any spiritual or theological issues no matter what their own convictions were? (Working With Others, pg.93:1)*

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<sup>117</sup> 'Inwardly' *adverb*; within the mind.

<sup>118</sup> 'Footing' *noun*; the basis on which something is established or operates.

<sup>119</sup> 'Roots' *noun, similar*; foundation, origin, heart, essence, etc.

<sup>120</sup> 'Vestige' *noun; similar*; trace, remainder, fragment, etc.

<sup>121</sup> 'Prejudice' *noun*; preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience.

<sup>122</sup> 'Arouse' *verb*; evoke or awaken (a feeling, emotion, or response).

<sup>123</sup> 'Antipathy' *noun*; a deep-seated feeling of aversion.

**READ** 12:2 - 12:5

***My own conception...***

**12 : 2**

**L2.** *Why didn't I choose my own conception of a Power greater than myself? Did they suggest this? How did I feel about this idea?*

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**12 : 3**

**L1.** *Did this seemingly novel idea melt my icy intellectual mountain? What did I think of this idea? Did it make the whole Power\* greater than myself-idea easier to digest? What is my experience?*

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**12 : 4**

**L1.** *Was it only a matter of being willing to believe in a Power greater than myself and nothing more was required of me to make a beginning? What is my experience?*

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**L3.** *Did I see that growth could start from this point? What is my experience?*

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**L4.** *Was I willing to believe that upon a foundation of complete willingness I might build what I saw in my friends? Did it seem to have become accessible to me purely by willingness? What is my experience?*

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**L6.** *Would I have it? What was my thought?*

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***I came to believe that a Power greater than myself could restore me to sanity.***

*In the following paragraphs following his friend's suggestion, Bill describes his moment of Coming to Believe, his Second Step experience, personal to him, followed by what he did after that on his friend's suggestions on which the 12 Steps of A.A. were later based.*

**READ** 12:5 - 13:1

***My Experience of Coming to Believe...***

**12 : 5**

**L2.** *Did I see, feel, and believe? What was my experience of passing the threshold of willingness to believe?*

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**L4.** *Did a new world come into view? Did I have a new perspective on life? Did I regain hope? What was my "Coming to believe that this could work for me too?"*

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***A memory of an experience I once had...***

**12 : 6**

**L2.** *Had I ever needed and wanted a Power greater than myself? What is my memory?*

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L3. Had there ever been a willingness to have Power greater than myself—and did that leave an impression on me in that moment? What is my experience?

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L4. Had this sense of presence of something greater than me eventually been blotted<sup>124</sup> out by worldly<sup>125</sup> clamors<sup>126</sup>, mostly those within myself? What is my experience?

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13: Continuing 12:6

L1. Had it been so ever since? What is my experience?

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L2. Had I been blind? Had this Power always been there? What is my experience?

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**The Program of Action...**

In the following paragraphs Bill describes in a general way what he did following the suggestions of his friend Ebby. Although the 12 steps as we know them in this book had not been formulated at that point, and the message Ebby was carrying to Bill was the message of the Oxford Group, we can recognise the same principles at work. We use this part to “outline the program of action, explaining how we made our self-appraisal (step 4), how we straightened out our past (Step 9) and why we are now endeavoring to be helpful to others.” (Working with Others pg.94:1) We describe our experience of going through the Steps in a general way.

**READ 13:1 - 14:1**

**Separated from alcohol for the last time...**

**13 : 1**

L1. When was I separated from alcohol for the last time?<sup>127</sup> What is my experience, when did I believe I was not going to drink anymore?

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**The program of action...**

**13 : 2**

L1. Bill humbly<sup>128</sup> offered himself to God, as he understood God then, to do with him as God would, he placed himself unreservedly under God's care and direction.<sup>129</sup> Bill admitted for the first time that of himself he was nothing; that without God he was lost.<sup>130</sup>

Step 3. How did I take my Third Step? How did I make my decision to trust and rely on a Power greater than me, as I understood it then? What is my experience?

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<sup>124</sup> 'Blotted out' verb; obscure a view, and also; obliterate or disregard something painful in one's memory or existence. Similar; conceal, hide, obliterate, eradicate.

<sup>125</sup> 'Worldly' adjective; of or concerned with material values or ordinary life rather than a spiritual existence.

<sup>126</sup> 'Clamor' noun; a loud and confused noise, and also; a strongly expressed protest or demand. Similar; urging, insistence.

<sup>127</sup> 'Delirium Tremens' (DT) noun; a psychotic condition typical of withdrawal in chronic alcoholics, involving tremors, hallucinations, anxiety, and disorientation.

<sup>128</sup> 'Humbly' adverb; in a way that shows or suggests a modest or low estimate of one's importance.

<sup>129</sup> Oxford Group Step 2. Dependence and guidance from a Higher Power. pg.292.

<sup>130</sup> Oxford Group Step 1, Complete Deflation pg.292.

L5. Bill ruthlessly faced his wrongs<sup>131</sup>...

*Step 4. What is my Fourth Step Inventory experience? How did I make a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself?*

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13 : 3

L1. Bill fully acquainted his friend with his problems and deficiencies.<sup>132</sup>

*Step 5. What is my Fifth Step experience?*

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13 : 2

L6. Bill became willing to have his new-found Friend<sup>133</sup> take them (his wrongs, 13:2:L5, his problems and deficiencies 13:3:L1) away, root and branch.<sup>134</sup>

*Step 6 & 7. What is my Sixth and Seventh Step experience?*

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13 : 3

L2. Bill made a list of people he had hurt or toward whom he felt resentment and expressed his entire willingness to approach these individuals, admitting his wrong.<sup>135</sup>

*Step 8. What is my Eighth Step experience?*

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L4. Bill was never to be critical of them, he was to right all such matters to the utmost of his ability.<sup>136</sup>

*Step 9. What is my Ninth Step experience? What did my friend suggest I do? Did I right my wrongs to the utmost of my ability?*

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<sup>131</sup> 'Sin' noun, similar; wrong, wrongdoing,

<sup>132</sup> Step 5: Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. *Oxford Group Step 4, Confession. pg.292.*

<sup>133</sup> 'Friend' noun; a person with whom one has a bond of mutual affection, similar; companion, ally, but also; a person who supports a cause, by giving help, similar; patron, benefactor, sponsor. *Here with capital F, the author signifying 'God'.*

<sup>134</sup> Step 4: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. Step 7: Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings. *Oxford Group Step 3, Moral inventory, pg.292.*

<sup>135</sup> Step 8: Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all. *Oxford Group Step 5, Restitution.*

<sup>136</sup> Step 9: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. *Oxford Group Step 5, Restitution.*

13 : 4

L1. Bill was to test<sup>137</sup> his thinking by the new God-consciousness<sup>138</sup> within. Common<sup>139</sup> sense would thus become uncommon sense.<sup>140</sup> *What does this mean to me?*

*Step 10. What is my Tenth Step experience? How did I test my thinking by my awareness of a Power greater than myself as I went through the day? What did my friend suggest I do?*

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L3. Bill was to sit quietly when in doubt<sup>141</sup>, asking only for direction<sup>142</sup> and strength to meet his problems as God would have him. Never was he to pray for himself, except as his requests bore on his usefulness to others.<sup>143</sup>

*Step 11. What is my Eleventh Step experience? What did my friend suggest I do?*

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13 : 5

L1. Bill's friend promised when these things were done he would enter upon a new relationship<sup>144</sup> with his Creator; that he would have the elements of a way of living<sup>145</sup> which answers all his problems?<sup>146</sup>

*Step 12. What did my friend promise? What is my Twelfth Step experience concerning a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps?*

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*What is my experience concerning a new relationship with .....\* as I understand it?*

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*What is my experience with having the elements of a way of life answering all my problems?*

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<sup>137</sup> **'Test'** verb; take measures to check the quality, performance, or reliability of (something), especially before putting it into widespread use or practice. *Similar*; try out, check, investigate, study, etc.

<sup>138</sup> **'Consciousness'** noun; a person's awareness or perception of something. **'God-consciousness'**; awareness of God, (a Power greater than myself.)

<sup>139</sup> **'Common sense'** noun; good sense and sound judgement in practical matters. **'Common'** adjective; occurring, found, or done often; prevalent. *Similar*; usual, ordinary, habitual. **'Uncommon'** similar; unusual, *but also*; remarkable, extraordinary, exceptional. **'Sense'** noun; a feeling that something is the case. *Similar*; awareness, feeling, sensation, etc.

<sup>140</sup> **Step 10:** Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

<sup>141</sup> **'Doubt'** noun; a feeling of uncertainty or lack of conviction. *Similar*; uncertainty, indecision, hesitation, insecurity, apprehension, etc..

<sup>142</sup> **'Direction'** noun; the course which must be taken in order to reach a destination. *similar*; guidance. *And also*; instructions on how to reach a destination or about how to do something.

<sup>143</sup> **Step 11:** Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.

<sup>144</sup> **'Relationship'** noun; the state of being connected.

<sup>145</sup> **'A way of living'**; this is what is on offer here. A way of living which answers *all* my problems.

<sup>146</sup> **Step 12:** Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

**L4.** Belief<sup>147</sup> in the power of God, plus enough willingness<sup>148</sup>, honesty and humility<sup>149</sup> to establish and maintain<sup>150</sup> the new order<sup>151</sup> of things, were the essential<sup>152</sup> requirements?<sup>153</sup>

*What did my friend tell me about the essential requirements? And What is my experience?*

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**READ 14:1 - 14:5**

**Simple but not easy...**

**14 : 1**

**L1.** Was it simple, but not easy; was there a price to be paid? *What is my experience?*

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**L2.** Did it mean destruction of my self-centeredness?<sup>154</sup> *What did it mean the destruction of? Is this simple but not easy? What is my experience?*

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**L3.** Bill had to turn in<sup>155</sup> all things to *what he calls* the Father of Light<sup>156</sup> who presides<sup>157</sup> over us all?  
*What is my experience? How would I word this?*

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*In paragraph 2 to 5 of this page Bill describes his spiritual experience as a result of fully accepting these proposals (note that he hasn't actually yet done some of these things, he has become willing to make amends to them all, Step 8). We may use these considerations to describe our own experience as the result of having done our amends in Step 9, or while practicing 10 & 11; how the 9th step promises manifested in our experience. As Bill mentions this experience came to him sudden and profound but to most people it comes gradually. If we are one of most people we may still use this paragraph to look in our own gradual experience to describe this.*

**My Spiritual Experience...**

**14 : 2**

**L1.** Did I think these were revolutionary and drastic proposals, but the moment I fully accepted them, what was the effect? *What was my experience when I fully accepted them, became willing and had gone through with it?*

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<sup>147</sup> **'Belief'** *noun*; trust, faith, or confidence in (someone or something).

<sup>148</sup> **'Willingness'** *similar*; readiness, desire, wish, etc.

<sup>149</sup> **'Humility'** *noun*; the quality of having a modest view of one's importance. *Similar*, modesty.

<sup>150</sup> **'Establish'** *verb, similar*; set up, start, begin. **'Maintain'** *verb, similar*; continue, keep going, etc.

<sup>151</sup> **'Order'** *noun, similar*; organization, structure, etc.

<sup>152</sup> **'Essential'** *adjective, similar*; necessary, key, important, etc.

<sup>153</sup> **'The elements'** *noun*: an essential or characteristic part of something abstract. *Here referring to 'Belief in the Power of God, willingness, honesty and humility (ref. Pg.13:4-L1)*

<sup>154</sup> *This is the 'price' as referred to in the former question. Reconsider the former question, is this simple but not easy? How do I do this? see the next question.*

<sup>155</sup> **'Turn in'** *transitive verb*; to deliver up, hand over. **'Turn to'** *transitive verb*; (turn to someone) to go to someone for help when you are having difficulty dealing with a situation.

<sup>156</sup> **'Father of Light'** yet another expression for God, 'Father' being a synonym for 'creator', similar; **'Mother Nature'**.

<sup>157</sup> **'Preside'** *verb*; be in charge of.

L3. How did I sense, what was it followed by, did I experience peace, serenity? *What is my experience?*

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L4. Was there utter<sup>158</sup> confidence? How did I feel?  
*What is my experience? What was this sense?*

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L7. Bill states this experience comes to most people gradually, how was the impact on me?  
*What is my experience?*

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14 : 3

L1. Did I doubt my sanity? *What is my experience? Did I doubt my experience?*

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14 : 4

L1. Did I understand it? Did I think I'd better hang on to it? Was anything better than the way I was? *What is my experience?*

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L4. Do I now see many people who have such experiences? Do I know they are real? *What is my experience?*

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**READ** 14:5 - 15:2

***Working with Others...***

14 : 5

L1. After Bill's experience the thought came to him that there were thousands of hopeless alcoholics who might be glad to have what had been so freely given him. He thought how he could perhaps help some of them. They in turn might work with others.<sup>159</sup>

*Did/do thoughts come to me about how I could help others? Do I think about how I can be helpful to other alcoholics? What is my experience?*

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14 : 6

L1. Did my friend emphasize the absolute necessity to demonstrate these principles in all my affairs?<sup>160</sup> *How do I demonstrate these principles in all my affairs? What is my experience?*

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L2. Did my friend emphasize it being imperative<sup>161</sup> to work with others as they had worked with me?  
*Was the importance of 'working with others' made emphatic? And what has been my experience? How crucial is my work with others to me?*

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<sup>158</sup> 'Utter' adjective; complete; absolute. 'Confidence' noun; the feeling or belief that one can have faith in or rely on someone or something. Similar; trust, belief, faith, reliance, etc.

<sup>159</sup> *The thought that started A.A. also referred to in the Doctor's Opinion (pg.XXVII:DL:5)*

<sup>160</sup> **Step 12:** Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. *Necessary for me to stay sober and happy.*

<sup>161</sup> 'Imperative' adjective; of vital importance; crucial.

L4. Did I hear Faith without works being dead<sup>162</sup>? And what does this now mean to me? What is my experience?

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L6. Is it true for me that if I don't work on perfecting and enlarging my spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others<sup>163</sup> I won't be able to survive the certain trials and low spots ahead?

*What happens if I don't work on perfecting and enlarging my spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others? What is my experience?*

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15: Continuing 14:6

L3. Do I believe if I don't work<sup>164</sup>, I will surely drink again? and if I drink, I will surely die?<sup>165</sup> What does this mean to me? What does my alcoholic death look like? Why do I work?

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15 : 1

L1. Have I abandoned<sup>166</sup> myself with enthusiasm<sup>167</sup> to the idea of helping other alcoholics to a solution of their problems? *What is my experience?*

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L5. When I am not too well, and waves of self-pity<sup>168</sup> and resentment<sup>169</sup> sometimes nearly drive me back to a drink, when all other measures fail, work with another alcoholic saves the day? *What is my experience? How vital is it to me?*

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L12. Is this a design for living that works in rough going<sup>170</sup>? *What is my experience of this working in rough going?*

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READ 15:2 - 16:1

### **The Fellowship...**

15 : 2

L3. Have I commenced<sup>171</sup> to make many fast friends<sup>172</sup> and has a fellowship<sup>173</sup> grown up among me of which it is a wonderful thing to feel a part?<sup>174</sup> *Or have I grown up among a fellowship? What is my experience of the fellowship?*

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L4. Have I been able to have the joy of living, even under pressure and difficulties? *What is my experience?*

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<sup>162</sup> 'Faith without works' phrase; explain works as action, causing change. Belief in me as well as through me as in my actions. Find article

<sup>163</sup> 'Work and self-sacrificing for others' here; meaning of 'Works' as used in the former Line 4 of this paragraph.

<sup>164</sup> 'Work' noun; activity involving mental or physical effort done in order to achieve a purpose or result. Here; referring to the 'work and self-sacrifice for others' as described in Line 6 same paragraph 6 at the end of page 14.

<sup>165</sup> Do I believe or am I willing to believe that for me to drink, means to die?

<sup>166</sup> 'Abandon' verb, similar; give oneself up to.

<sup>167</sup> 'Enthusiasm' noun; intense and eager enjoyment, interest, or approval. 'Entheos' springs from the Greek words, 'En' meaning within and 'Theos' meaning Spirit. Entheos is originally the root word for enthusiasm.

<sup>168</sup> 'Self-pity' noun; excessive, self-absorbed unhappiness over one's own troubles.

<sup>169</sup> 'Resentment' noun; bitter indignation at having been treated unfairly. Similar; irritation, discontent.

<sup>170</sup> 'Rough going' phrase; a difficult situation.

<sup>171</sup> 'Commence' verb, similar; begin.

<sup>172</sup> 'Fast friends' noun plural; Any of a group of friends who are often in each other's company, and appear to be inseparable

<sup>173</sup> 'Fellowship' noun; friendly association, especially with people who share one's interests. Similar; friendship, camaraderie, togetherness.

<sup>174</sup> 'To feel a part of' as opposed to feeling separate from. Did I feel alone? Does the idea of fellowship appeal to me?

**L6.** Have I seen impossible domestic situation being righted; feuds<sup>175</sup> and bitterness of all sorts wiped out? *What is my experience with my domestic and/or relationship situations?*

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**L8.** Have I been able to resume<sup>176</sup> a vital place in the lives of my family and community? *What is my experience with my family and community?*

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**L10.** Have I been able to regain my professional standing? *What is my experience professionally?*

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**L11.** Is there scarcely<sup>177</sup> been any form of trouble and misery that can't be overcome?<sup>178</sup> *What is my experience?*

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**L14.** Do I attend a homegroup frequently<sup>179</sup> so that newcomers may find the fellowship they seek?<sup>180</sup> *What is my homegroup experience? Why do frequent my homegroup?*

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**READ 16:1 - 16:1**

***A perfect way of Life...***

**16 : 1**

**L1.** Is an alcoholic in his cups<sup>181</sup> an unlovely creature?<sup>182</sup> Are my struggles<sup>183</sup> with them variously strenuous<sup>184</sup>, comic<sup>185</sup> and tragic<sup>186?187</sup> *What is my experience with helping others?*

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**L4.** Have I realised some can't, or won't, see our way of life? *What is my experience?*

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**16 : 2**

**L1.** However, is there a vast amount of fun about it all? *What is my experience?*

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<sup>175</sup> **'Feud'** *noun*; a prolonged and bitter quarrel or dispute

<sup>176</sup> **'Resume'** *verb*; begin again or continue after a pause or interruption.

<sup>177</sup> **'Scarcely'** *adverb, similar*; hardly, seldom.

<sup>178</sup> *Which form of trouble and misery do I believe I can't overcome?*

<sup>179</sup> **'Frequently'** *adverb*; regularly or habitually; often.

<sup>180</sup> *Why would I regularly attend a home group? "so that newcomers may find the fellowship they seek."*

<sup>181</sup> **'In one's cups'** *phrase*; drunk.

<sup>182</sup> *Am I, when drunk, an unlovely creature?*

<sup>183</sup> **'Struggles'** *noun plural*; a determined effort under difficulties. *Similar*; endeavor, effort, work.

<sup>184</sup> **'Strenuous'** *adjective*; requiring or using great effort or exertion. *Similar*; difficult, tough, demanding.

<sup>185</sup> **'Comic'** *adjective*; causing or meant to cause laughter. *Similar*; funny, amusing, absurd.

<sup>186</sup> **'Tragic'** *adjective, similar*; sad, moving, painful.

<sup>187</sup> *Will I be cool with that?*

**L3.** Just underneath the seeming worldliness and levity is there deadly<sup>188</sup> earnestness<sup>189</sup>?  
*How would I explain this?*

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**L4.** Does Faith<sup>190</sup> have to work twenty-four hours a day<sup>191</sup> in and through me, or I'll perish<sup>192</sup>?  
*How would I explain this? What is my experience?*

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**16 : 3**

**L1.** Do I feel like I need look no further for Utopia<sup>193</sup>? *What does this mean to me? What is my experience?*

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**L2.** Do I have it with me right here and now? *What is my experience?*

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**L3.** Does each day my first encounter with A.A. multiply itself in a widening circle of peace on earth and good will to all? *How would I say this? What is my experience of the ripple effect?*

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**End of APPENDIX \_ MY STORY**

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<sup>188</sup> **'Deadly'** *adjective*; complete; total.

<sup>189</sup> **'Earnestness'** *noun*; sincere and intense conviction.

<sup>190</sup> **'Faith'** *noun*; with capital F; confidence or trust in a person, idea, deity, religion, or any specifiable belief that is not based on proof. *Faith working in me' and Faith working through me'; Being one with ..... in my thoughts, feelings and actions*

<sup>191</sup> **'Twenty four hours a day'**; always, continuously.

<sup>192</sup> **'Perish'** *verb, similar*; die.

<sup>193</sup> **'A perfect way of Life'**