

Steps 10, 11, and 12

Joe McQ. & Charlie P. · session 9 of 9

The fourth dimension: the last three steps as growth, not maintenance 00:00

Charlie 00:00

Let's look at the last three steps, not as just maintenance steps, not just to keep us sober, but to see if we don't actually continue to grow in our relationship with God, with ourselves, and with other human beings. Twice in the book, Bill has mentioned a fourth dimension of existence. Once in his story, once in chapter 2, a dimension of living far beyond the normal three. You can't explain it, you can't describe it, you can only feel it. And that's what the last three steps do: move us into another dimension of living. Let's look at them for just a few minutes.

Step 10 as a daytime, walking-around step 00:40

Joe 00:40

One of the things that we did as a fellowship is we took the steps out of the book and we put them on these little cards, put them on the wall. And if you look at step 10 on this card or on the wall, by the way, we left the instructions on how to work the steps in the book. People come in day A and look on the wall and try to work the steps off the wall without instructions. No wonder they get in trouble. But step ten off the wall where this card says continue to take personal inventory, and when wrong, promptly admitted it. And it looked like if we just continued to take a little inventory, and if we were wrong, promptly admitted it, we would be doing the intent in step 10. And somehow or other, we got the idea that we do that at night. Well, the nighttime portion is over in step 11. It's not in step 10. And Charlie and I have discussed this at great detail. We don't get in trouble at night in bed anymore. We need a daytime walking around step. So let's look at step 10 in a different light. So this thought brings us to step 10, which suggests that we continue to take personal inventory and continue to set right any new mistakes as we go along. We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past. We have entered the world of the Spirit.

Charlie 01:54

We've had a spiritual awakening.

Joe 01:56

Our next function is to grow,

Charlie 01:58

to grow, not maintain, not stay where we are, but to grow

Joe 02:02

in understanding and effectiveness. Now, this is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime. Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear.

Charlie 02:12

What step did we use to look at that in the first place? Anyone remember? Step four? Okay. And when these crop up, we ask God

Joe 02:19

at once to remove them. What steps did we use there? Six and seven, all right. We discuss them with someone immediately. And what step was that? Five, okay. And make amends quickly if we've harmed anyone. What steps did we use there? Eight and nine. Then we'd resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others is our code.

Doing Steps 4-9 daily: Charlie's spot-check at nine in the morning

02:38

Charlie 02:38

It looks to me like if we follow the directions in the book, that we will be doing steps 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 every day on a daily basis for the rest of our lives. I would defy anybody in this room to do 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 on a daily basis and stay the way you are. You absolutely cannot do that. I've got that little inventory sheet right up here in my head, just as plain as day, and you do too. And what I've trained myself to do, if I get screwed up at 9 o'clock in the morning, used to, I'd wait till I went to bed at night to do something about it. Well, when I do that, I've wasted another day in anger and worry and depression and etc. I finally trained myself, and when I get screwed up about 9 o'clock, get off in the corner by myself. Say, okay, Charlie, who are you mad at? What did they do to you? What part of self is affected? What did you do, if anything, to set it in motion? Which character defect has come back to the surface? I can't get upset unless one of those old character defects has come back selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, frightened, or inconsiderate. I can spot it in just like that. I say, okay, God, you know I don't want to be this way. Please take this away from me, this selfishness or this dishonesty or whatever it is. I try to discuss it with someone immediately, preferably my sponsor. Sometimes I can, sometimes I can't, but I try to. Then I make amends quickly if I hurt anybody in this process. 10, 15, 20

minutes, it's all gone. The rest of the day is okay. I have wasted all the time that I want to waste in resentments and fear and anger and worry and depression and etc. I don't have to do that anymore. My God, I love to feel good. I just don't want to waste any more time, what little I've got left in that other kind of jazz. I've got a tool here that works every time. And as you continue to take personal inventory, as you continue to look and see who you're mad at, and etc., and etc., and etc., you're going to learn more about yourself. As you ask God to take these things away, they become less and less. As you discuss them with another human being, preferably our sponsor, we know more about ourselves. As we make amends quickly, our relationship with the world and everybody in it becomes better and better. You can't do step 10 the way the book says, and stay the way you are. You just can't. Your relationship with God, with yourself, and with your fellow man will become better and better and better and better. A new dimension of living that we never dreamed existed. Now be careful. This is just like six and seven. This is the other changing step. And if you stay fouled up, you can't blame it on anybody else any longer. Because if you're fouled up and you use step 10, you can get rid of that stuff. But if you stay fouled up and stay angry and worried and depressed and selfish and dishonest, it's got to be because that's the way you want to be. I can't blame it on anybody or God or anything else any longer. And once in a great while, I like to be screwed up. There's times I like to be mad. Because when I'm mad, I can romp and stomp and raise hell with everybody around me all day long. And that gives me a comfortable feeling of superiority, and once in a while I just love it. There's times I like to be afraid because I can use that to rationalize and justify not doing what I should do or just as importantly doing something I shouldn't do. But when I do that anymore, I don't enjoy it like I used to. Somewhere about the middle of it, I catch myself and I say, Okay, idiot, you're doing it to yourself again. This thing really does work, and you'll continue to grow. Now, after step 10, you've got another set of promises. Let's look at them for just a moment.

The Step 10 promises: sanity returns, the problem is removed

07:00

Joe 07:00

I said, and we cease fighting anything or anyone, even alcohol, for by this time, sanity will have returned. Remember it said we came to believe that a power greater than ourself would restore us to sanity? Well, we get our sanity back on step eighty four on page eighty four, by the way. For by this time sanity will have returned. But we will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame. We react sanely and normally, and we will find that this has happened automatically. We can see that our new attitude toward liquor had been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes. That's the miracle of it. We're

not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation. We feel as though we have been placed in a position of neutrality, safe and protected. We've not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky nor are we afraid. That is our experience. That is how we react, so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition. And again, remember way back on page 45, it said that the main object of this book was to enable me to find a power greater than myself which would solve my problem. And somewhere between there and here, we have the first nine steps or ten steps to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. And one day, into six or seven or eight months of sobriety, I'm working these steps. I looked up one day and I didn't, I said, What happened to that desire of drink that I used to have? It's just gone. I mean, it was just gone, seemingly without any effort on my part. I found the power, and the power solved the problem. It was just gone. That's the miracle of it.

Developing a sixth sense through prayer and meditation

08:35

Charlie 08:35

Now, the next to the last paragraph on page 85. Much has already been said about receiving strength, inspiration, and direction, not suggestion, from him who has all knowledge and power. If we've carefully followed directions, not suggestions, we begun to sense the flow of His Spirit into us. To some extent, we become God-conscious. We begin to develop this vital sixth sense, but we must go further, and that means more action. In other words, what's happened to us in these steps of 3 through 10, we've removed enough self-will that we're now becoming God-conscience. And by now, we're beginning to receive some directions from God. Now, if the book says that God has all power and all direction, and I believe He does, the book says so. And it says God dwells within each of us, and I believe he does, the book says so. Then it really stands to reason that you and I have within ourselves all the knowledge and all the power that we could ever need to handle any situation which comes up in the future. It's called a sixth sense of direction. I've got five senses. Everything I know on a conscious level, I learn from those. I can see and I can hear and I can smell and I can taste and I can touch. But what little bit I've learned through my five senses of direction is just a small amount of knowledge. But if God has all knowledge and all power, if I can tap into Him, then I can handle any situation in the future with God's help, whatever it might be. It's long been known we do that. You develop the sixth sense of direction through prayer and meditation. Most of us we get here, I didn't know anything about meditation. I thought meditation is when you tried to clear your mind of all thought. Well, I've never been able to do that. When I wake up in the morning, that sucker turns on and it will not clear out. I thought maybe it was chanting, listening to soft music. That's probably some forms of meditation, but I knew nothing about any of it. I knew very little

about prayer, even raised in church. I only knew two prayers. One went like this. Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. And if I die before I wake, I'm not into that prayer anymore. That's dealing with death, and I don't want nothing to do with that. The other prayer that I used, and I bet you used it too, went like this: God, if you get me out of this damn mess, I swear I'll never do this again. Now I'm going to have to develop a life of prayer and meditation. Would seem to be impossible, wouldn't it? Bill Wilson is faced with the job of teaching people who are spiritually bankrupt how to pray and meditate, and Bill Wilson don't know how to do it either. Thank God he didn't. Because if he had really been knowledgeable, he would have written in such a manner that I could never have understood it. But he didn't know enough about it to be able to do that. What he did do is what he's done all the way through the book. He gives us some definite, valuable suggestions. And he said, if we will use those in our lives today, we will develop our own life of prayer and meditation. He couldn't tell us how to pray and meditate, but he could tell us how to develop our own. He starts for just a few moments over on page 86. He tells us what to do when we go to bed at night. Here it is now in step 11.

Step 11 nighttime review and the self-will / God-will inventory sheet

12:18

Joe 12:18

He said, When we retire at night, we constructively view our day. Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest, or afraid?

Charlie 12:25

I believe that's step four again, isn't it?

Joe 12:28

Yeah. Do we owe an apology?

Charlie 12:30

That must be steps eight and nine again.

Joe 12:32

Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another person at once? I believe that's step five again. Were we kind and loving toward all? What could we have done better? Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time, or were we thinking what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life? But we must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse, or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others. After making our review, we ask God's forgiveness to inquire what corrective measures must

Charlie 13:00

be taken or steps. There are steps six and seven again. So, what the book is really suggesting is when we go to bed at night, we sit down and kind of take another little inventory. Step 10 was during the day when we're disturbed. Step 11 is before we go to bed at night. We made up a little sheet here you could use. You can use anything you want to. The main thing is: do we inventory or not? One side of the sheet, we took the basic character defects: selfish, self-seeking, dishonest, frightened, inconsideration, we took all the other defects in the 12 and 12, which are the offshoots of those first four, put them on the left-hand side of the sheet, and call them the personality characteristics of a self-willed person. We tried to find the opposite and put them on the right-hand side of the sheet. Call that the personality characteristics of a God-will person. Now, all we're trying to do is get from the left-hand side of the sheet to the right-hand side. And I can sit down at night with this little sheet and run down through it, making a few check marks. That shows me where I've been that day, shows me what I need to continue to work on. Never do I find myself on either side of the sheet. The check marks change locations from time to time, that I'm beginning to notice that I'm marking more of them on the right than I am on the left. And slowly, over a period of time, we continue to become a different human being. Now, I've learned one thing about my sobriety. I am going to inventory. I've got one of two choices. I can put it off and put it off and put it off and put it off until I'm so sick that I'm almost drunk, and then I start trying to dig myself out from under that mess, or I can take just a few minutes each day, and by doing it a few minutes each day, I keep myself in reasonably good condition. And I'm in much less chance of drinking. I find that it takes less energy to do it on a daily basis than it does to wait till I'm almost drunk and then start trying to dig myself out from under it. A very definite, valuable suggestion. Okay, the next paragraph tells us what to do in the morning when we get up. On awakening, let's think about the 24 hours ahead. 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. Most of us get up in the morning, first thing we do is go to the bathroom. One guy told me the first thing he did was get on a treadmill. I said, Man, you've got a better bladder than I've got. I go to the bathroom first. Then we head for the kitchen. And we get a cup of coffee and maybe a little food, and we feed the body. We get the body taken care of, we go back to the bathroom again. And you ladies fix your hair, and we men fix our beards or faces or whatever. And we get that part of us done, we go to the closet and we begin to pick out the clothes that's going to cover the body during the day. We've got to make sure they match now. We've got to make sure they match the right color. We spend lots of time

on our clothes. After we get the body all taken care of, we feed the cat or the dog. We start out the door. We lock the door behind us. We don't want anybody to steal our junk. We go out to the car, and we checked there and the tires, and we checked the fuel in the fuel tank. We turn the switch on, start the motor, and we take off down the road. But what did we do about our minds that morning? We took care of all the material things, including our body. What did we do about our minds? Our minds are going to run the whole show all day. Did we check the air there? Did we check the fuel level there? Did we feed the mind a little bit? If we would take five to ten minutes in the morning to ask God to direct our thinking throughout the day, ask God to give us the right thought and action. Before we even start thinking about the day, then chances are our thoughts about the day are going to be in better shape. If we spent five minutes in the morning there, coupled with five minutes in the evening when we go to bed. There's no telling what we could do with our minds. If we spend as much time on our minds as we do on our bodies. My God, we could become anything, couldn't we? If you've spent five in the morning and five in the evening, you've still got 23 hours and 50 minutes to screw the thing up. It only takes a little bit of time, very definite, valuable suggestion. 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, intuitive thought, or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. This is a form of meditation for busy people. We alcoholics don't have time to lay down on the floor and listen to soft music. We don't have time for chanting and all that stuff. We're busy people. The book says: when you face indecision, you can't decide what to do. Recognize you don't have the answer. Turn to God and ask God for the right thought or decision. Don't struggle, relax and take it easy. I think what it means is: get your mind off on something else. And the way I get my mind off on something else is I go start mowing the grass, painting the house, or washing the dishes. And quite often my mind goes back to that subject, and I've got information I didn't have before. It says, Why don't you call Bill? Maybe he'll know. And I call Bill, and Bill's got the answer. They used to say, My, wasn't it lucky? I call Bill.? No This is a form of tapping into the sixth sense of direction. And if you practice at it, practice at it, practice at it, practice at it, it gets to where it becomes a common thing to do. It's amazing how this stuff works. Very simple suggestions. Page 87, first full paragraph down there toward the middle of the page, tells us how to pray.

The morning meditation: feeding the mind like we feed the body

15:00

How to pray: only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out

19:58

See, 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 we're careful to make no requests for ourselves only. We may ask for ourselves, however, if others will be helped. We're 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. As I said, I used to use God like an errand boy, send him out to get this done, get that done. It didn't work, he never didn't come back with nothing. You know, but I learned through doing that because I started praying only for the knowledge of his will for me and the power to carry that out. And today I can't think of anything that would be better than to have God's will done in my life. Only. It would be a whole lot better than anything that I could ever dream of because, as I said here today, I am in places today in many, many areas of my life that you can't get to other than by God's grace. It cannot be done. You know, I was practicing this thing around, and one day I was listening to the radio, and I heard a song that I heard all my life. And it talks about having a plane of inspiration. And I heard this song all my life, it's called In the Garden. Every of you all know that song? And it came to me, I said, Well, that's a song about prayer and meditation, isn't it? In the morning, while the dew is still on the roses. That's about prayer and meditation. And I didn't know that. It just came to me. I can read these things, and I can see these things today, and I know what they mean. I mean, I really do know what they mean. I don't know that came from either. Certainly wasn't anything for me. I think it's God working in my life. I believe

Charlie 21:37

that. They said to me, Pray only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry that out. I said, How in the hell is he going to know what I want? And they said, He doesn't care what you want. They said, He's interested in what you need, and he knows more about what you need than you know yourself. And that's turned out to be exactly true. If I had written a list of things that I thought I needed when I first came to AA. If I'd have said, God, give me these things and I will be satisfied for the rest of my life, I would have cheated myself. God has given me things far, far, far beyond my dreams could possibly be when I first came to AA. Absolutely amazing the things that take place in our life by simply, simply trying to follow God's will. People who have been self-willed like us, who have literally destroyed ourselves on self-will, we don't need to be telling God what we want. God knows what we need, and if we do His will, he's going to see that we get it. You know, who could ever have dreamed years and years ago we could be sitting in this room today doing what we're doing? A week ago, we were in Reykjavik, Iceland, a place I'd wanted to visit all my life. And by golly, I got to tour Iceland. Hell, I'm 69 years old now before I got to do it, but I finally got to do it. I couldn't have done that if I'd been drinking. A year or two ago, I got to go through the channel under the English channel. I read something

in a magazine when I was a kid, about nine years old, it said sooner or later the English and the French would build that thing. I said, Then, if they ever build it, I'm going to go through it. finally, I got to go through the channel and ride that damn channel train doing 200 miles an hour. Yeah, 60 years I dreamed that dream. Finally, I got to do it. Oh, yeah, God knows what we need. He's not interested in what we want.

Praying with a spouse; pausing through the day

23:43

Joe 23:43

Page 87. If our circumstances, we ask our wives or friends to join us in morning meditation. About fifteen years ago, we were sitting in my living room, my wife over there in her chair, and me in mine, and I'm reading my prayer and meditation stuff, and she's reading her prayer and meditation stuff. And she looked over and said, Joe, would you uh oh, she said, Honey, that's what she said. And I said, I'm not ready for that this morning. I said, oh, you know, you old silly thing. She said, I want you to read this for me and tell me what it says. I said, well, I can do that. So what I read that for her, and I told her what it said, and I told her a lot more than she wanted to know about it. And the next morning, she said, Would you read this and tell me what this says? And I did, and we discussed that a little bit, and that kind of set up a little deal in our house of praying together and sharing together. We hadn't done that before, and I've heard all my life those people that pray together stay together. Joe, how long has it been since you and fellas have had a divorce? It's been 21 years. And I don't ever thought about that. She came up with that.

Charlie 24:49

Bottom of page 87. 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're 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're not burning up energy foolishly, did and we were trying to arrange life to suit ourselves. It works. It really does. That's the full paragraph right there. We alcoholics are undisciplined, so we let God discipline us in the simple way we just outlined. If you'll follow these definite and valuable suggestions on page 86, 87. You will develop your own life of prayer and meditation. You'll make your conscious contact. You'll be able to tap into that sixth sense of direction, and it's amazing the things that we can learn by doing that. Okay, we're going to talk now just a little bit about step 12, and then we'll be done. We don't want to go through this next chapter. We don't have the time, but I do want to look at two or three things in it very briefly. Let's go to page 92. Now, this is telling us how to work

with other people: how to do our 12-step call, how to sponsor., and etc The first paragraph says: Tell him how baffled you were, how you finally learned that you were sick. Give him an account of the struggles you made to stop. Show him the mental twist which leads to the first drink of a spree. We suggest you do this as we've done it in the chapter on alcoholism. If he was alcoholic, he will understand you at once. See, this is what Silkworth told Bill to do. He will match your mental inconsistency with some of his own. If you're satisfied that he's a real alcoholic, begin to dwell on the hopeless feature of the malady. Show him from your own experience, how the queer mental condition surrounding that first drink prevents normal functioning of the willpower. In other words, we share our story and we show him our allergy, our obsession of the mind, our hopeless condition of the mind and body, and if he's a real alcoholic, he'll match it immediately. We get his attention that way. We tell him exactly what's wrong with him. Page 93. Let him ask you that question, if he will. Tell him exactly what happened to you. Stress the spiritual feature freely. If the man be agnostic or atheist, make it emphatic. It is not have to agree with your conception of God. He can use any conception he likes, provided it makes sense to him. The main thing is that he be willing to believe in a power greater than himself, and that he live by spiritual principles and sharing our story and telling him what happened. Then we get the idea of the need for the spiritual experience across to him after we got his attention by talking about the problem. Page 94. Outline the program of action, explaining how you made a self-appraisal, how you straighten out your past, and why you are now endeavoring to be helpful to him. Talk to him about the program of action. Take him by the hand and walk with him through the program of action. You see, it's suggesting here that we do the same thing the first 100 did. It's suggesting here we do the same thing the big book does. You see, the big book was the 12th step in print. They could not go call on that person individually. So the book had to tell him the problem, tell him the solution, show him the program of action. Now it's just as valid today working with other alcoholics as it was in 1939. We need to have no question about how to 12-step. We need to have no question about how to sponsor. This chapter tells us exactly how to do it. And I said to my sponsor one time, I said, Well, I'm afraid to work with another person. I'm afraid I'll hurt them. And he said, Charlie, you can't hurt them. He said, They're going to die from alcoholism, anyhow. That there's no way you can hurt them, and you might help yourself. So, if you're not working with others yet, for God's sake, start. The 12th step has three pieces in it, very briefly. The first part is the greatest promise in the book. Having had a spiritual awakening is the result of these steps. I think that promises to me that if I apply the first 11 steps in my life to the best of my ability, I will have a spiritual awakening. Now, what is a spiritual awakening? A personality chain sufficient to recover from alcoholism. Bill tells us in the 12 and 12: as many kinds of spiritual awakenings there are people in AA. But they've all got certain things in common. That is, that we're able to feel, believe, and

do things we could never do before on our own strength unaided. I feel things I've never felt before. I feel love, patience, tolerance, compassion, and good will toward my fellow man. Before AAAAAAAA cared less about you. Oh, yeah, you could have some, but I always got mine first. I don't feel that way anymore. I believe things I've never believed before. I believe God is a kind and a loving God. I believe He stands ready to help any human being anywhere in the world the instant they're ready to give up on self-will and turn to Him. When I came here, I thought He was hellfire and brimstone. I thought He was a God of justice. Thank God he's not a God of justice. If he was, I wouldn't be here today, would I? Some of you guys wouldn't be here either if he was. surely, he's pure mercy, pure love. Believe that with all my heart. I can do things I never could do before. By God, I can stay sober. I never could do that before. And because of the fact I'm sober, I'm allowed to do many, many, many, many things that I never dreamed that I could ever do. Like being here, going to Iceland, riding under the channel, going to Paris, France. Things that I never could do before. So surely I've had some kind of spiritual awakening. Now, I'm charged, though, with a responsibility. There really are no free rides. You do have to pay for what you receive. I am now charged with the responsibility of carrying this message to other alcoholics. Not a message, not the message, not some message, this message. What is this message. Having had a spiritual awakening is the result of these steps. I'm not like I used to be. Now, if you're in AA today and you're all screwed up and you don't feel good, if you've been doing a little drinking or even thinking about doing a little drinking, I know exactly where you're coming from. That's where I came from, too. But I applied these first 11 steps and I had a spiritual awakening, and I'm not that way anymore. And if you don't want to be that way anymore, then you apply the first 11 steps, and you won't be that way anymore either, because you'll have a spiritual awakening. It's the only message at AA's God. Some of us start fancying ourselves as healers, marital advisors, spiritual advisors, economic advisors. God, I don't know of anybody that screwed those things up worse than we have. No, we just know one thing. And let me tell you something. The one thing we know, we know it better than anybody alive. You and I know more about alcoholism than anybody alive. We're the only people that's ever experienced it. We know more about recovery from alcoholism than anybody alive, we're the only people that's ever done it. I think we're the luckiest people in the world. I think surely, surely, surely God got tired of seeing people like us die back in the 1930s. I think He decided to do something about it, and He's always worked with people through people. I believe he picked Bill and Bob, the first 100. I think he picked Abby Thatcher and Dr. Young and Dr. Silkworth and the Oxford groupers and that whole bunch and put it together so we could have it today. Now, if that's true and he picked people then, then we've got to realize that all those people are dead and gone. They're no longer here. If he picked them then, then surely he's still picking them today. There's not an alcoholic in this room that ought to be here. Every one of us ought

to be dead. Some of us, two or three times. And we said, My, weren't we lucky last night? I don't think luck had anything to do with it. I think God picked you out, let you suffer your alcoholism so you would learn what He wants you to know, and then when He got ready to use you, He removed the obsession to drink. That's the only reason we're here today, to be able to help other alcoholics. They tell me that ninety seven out of a hundred of us are going to die never even knowing we're alcoholic. If that's true, 3% of us are stumbling in the doors of AA. Less than half of us are recovering. We're talking about one out of 100. I used to say, God, why am I an alcoholic? Today I say, God, why am I not one of those dying from alcoholism? He's got a job for me. He's got a job for you. And it's only when you fit into God's plan for you that you really become happy. I think every human being on earth today, God's got a certain purpose for them. And I think ours is to carry this message of recovery to other alcoholics. We have the ability to avert death in countless thousands and thousands of people. Very few people have that opportunity. Carrying this message is very simple. Just do it like the book says to do it, and it always works for those that want it. If they don't want it, we can't do a thing about that. The final thing I have to do is practice these principles in all my affairs. Now, what are the principles? Oh, we hear arguments about this all the time. The principle of one is this, and the principle of the one, two is that, and the principle. no, I think he's referring to the steps. He said, having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, he already used steps once in step 12, so he's not going to use it twice. So this time he'll call them principles. Another place he calls them proposals. In the front of the 12 and 12, he says the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous are a set of principles. He's referring to the steps. Now it's easy for me to practice the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous NAA. I love you, I hope you love me, and we're going to do our best not to hurt each other. But I'm only NAA at the most an average of an hour a day. What do I do the other 23 hours? Can I practice these principles, these steps in my home with my spouse? Can I realize just how powerless I really am over that lady? Can I realize the insanity of trying to control her knowing full well I can't? Can I make a decision and turn her will and her life over to the care of God as I understand Him? Can I inventory me and find those defects of character they keep me trying to control? Can I talk about that to another human being? Can I become willing to have God remove and ask Him to do so and take those away? Can I make amends to her quickly when I've harmed her? Now there's times I'm ashamed to me. There's times I treat absolute strangers on the street with more courtesy than I treat my own wife in my own home. Just think, if I could practice these principles there with her and she with me, why we might pick up 10, 12 hours a day where we could be peaceful, happy, and free in our home. If we don't practice them, we don't stand a chance. We're at each other's throat continually. Can I practice them with my children? If I can do this with my children, what little time I have left with them is good times. If I don't, I try to control, they

resist, we have no good times at all. I might pick up another hour, two or three a day there. Can I do it on the job with my coworkers? And if I could do it on the job with my coworkers, well, I might be peaceful, happy, and free there for eight or nine or ten hours a day. Aren't we really saying that we have a set of tools that if we practice them in all our affairs, we can be peaceful, happy, free, and serene 24 hours a day, 365 days a year if we wish to. My sponsor used to say, Charlie, you can be just as happy as you want to be. And I'd say, You old fart, you have no idea what you're talking about. Today, I hear myself saying, You can be just as happy as you want to be. You got the tools to do it with. Now, make no mistake, God is not going to do this for you, other people are not going to do this for you. But you, with God's help and the help of other people, can do it for yourself. I think we're the luckiest people in the world. I really do, Joe.

Step 12: how to work with others, sponsor, and carry the message

25:00

Stories from the other book: the man let down through the roof, and Legion

38:51

Joe 38:51

Now, where does all this stuff come from? Well, it comes from the best of medicine, psychology, and religion. And there's a story in that other book about this fellow, and he was walking around practicing these principles and carrying this message. And one night he told the people there: he said, The things that I do, you can do also, and even greater. Well, a couple of guys heard this, and they went back to the little village. They had a sick friend there. They brought him to the meeting the next night. Now, I like to think they were alcoholics because they went up on the roof and they chopped a hole in the roof and they let the guy down in there. And he looked at that guy and he looked up at him. He said, Well, it's by your faith that this man was healed. See, it was by the faith of the people in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous when I arrived that I was able to hang around to until I could come believe, so that I could come to take some decisions, so that I too could come to have faith. The fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is extremely important to me. It was by their faith for me. Later on, he was in a little town called Cernan. And after the meeting that night, and he was leading the meeting or speaking at the meeting, and after the meeting that night, they were standing around smoking cigarettes and drinking wine, I guess, or coffee or whatever they were doing, and they were talking. And they told him a fellow they had locked in a cave on the side of the hill. Now, this might have been first treatment center, I don't know. And he said, I want to go up and talk to this guy. I said, No, you don't want to talk to this guy. This guy is full of resentments and he's full of fear. He's harmed a lot of people. We've got him chained to the wall

up there so he won't harm himself or other people. You don't want to go up and talk to him. He said, Yeah, I do. He said, What's his name? He said, His name is Legions, for he is many. Many defects of character, you see. So he went up there and talked to this guy for a little while and turned him loose. Cut loose of his resentment, cut loose of his fear, cut loose of his guilt, shame, remorse, and set him free. Now, he wrote a little step for us right here. Because the other people that he'd help, those other 12 guys he'd help, he took them with him. And Legion wanted to go with him. He said, Can I go with you and do what you do? And he said, No, Legion. He said, I want you to stay here and tell people what happened to you.

Charlie 40:53

I think they call that pass it on, is what Bill Wilson said. Is Barbara in the room? Barbara, are you here? Where are you, huh? Yeah, stand up. I want you all to meet Barbara in case you haven't got to meet her. You can tell by looking at her why I'm in love with her. She's red-headed. Okay, let's go to page 164.

Closing on page 164: abandon yourself to God, the road of happy destiny 41:23

Joe 41:23

Said, our book is meant to be suggestive only. We realize we know only a little. 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's 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. That's the only relationship this book talks about, by the way. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is a great fact for us. Abandon yourself to God as you understand God.

Charlie 41:58

We did that in steps 1, 2, and 3.

Joe 42:00

Admit you false to Him and to your fellows. We did that in 4, 5, 6, and 7. Clear away the wreckage of your past.

Charlie 42:06

We did that in 8 and 9.

Joe 42:07

And give freely what you find and join us.

Charlie 42:10

We'll do that in 10, 11, and 12.

Joe 42:11

And 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. you Thank and keep you until the end. We love you all.

Charlie 42:21

Thanks for letting us be here.

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