

SESSION 19

STEP 11 Into Action pp. 85 – 88

Step 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

We pause...and ask.... (87: 3) It works – it really does. (88: 1)

Take Step 11

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read from Chapter 6, *Into Action* the bottom of page 85 to the end of the chapter. Many read Step 11 in the *I2&I2*.
- **WRITE** Continue to write your daily reflections. Continue to make your Step 9 amends, and to take a Step 10 daily inventory.
- **TALK** Continue to discuss your work with your sponsor and other group members.
 - Heard in a meeting: “Being spiritual is being open minded and looking for the gifts in things.”
 - Heard in a meeting: “I pray to be who I am and all I am (and not somebody different) – to get a better and clearer sense of my place in the universe.”
- **PRACTICE DAILY MEDITATION / PRAYER** Meditation and prayer, like other tools of recovery, are intensely practical. Like all tools, they work better the more we use them. See optional meditation practice pp. 89-90 of this workbook.

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 11?

We review the three meditation / prayer practices of Step 11, pp. 85 - 88.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider 85: 3-88: 3)

1.) *Prayer and meditation*

- Heard in a meeting: “Prayer is talking to God. Meditation is listening for God.”
- Do I have a specific spiritual path? For what am I seeking?
- What is my understanding of the differences between religion and spirituality? What have I done to explore my own spirituality?
- Do I recognize that a moment of silence is meditation, where I may quiet my mind on a regular basis so that I can gain understanding and knowledge from my higher power?
- [Optional: ‘*Thy will not mine, be done.*’ ... *Just saying it over and over will often enable us to clear a channel choked up with anger, fear, frustration, or*

misunderstanding, and permit us to return to the surest help of all – our search for God [of our understanding]’s will, not our own, in the moment of stress. 12&12, 103: 0]

2.) *Conscious contact*

- The Big Book authors speak of the ***Retire at night meditation / prayer*** (86:1): *...Review our day. Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest, or afraid?*
- *Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time? ... After making our review we ask God [of our understanding]’s forgiveness and inquire, what corrective measures should be taken?* (86: 1)

- There also is the ***On awakening meditation / prayer*** (86: 2, 3 - 87: 0, 1, 2): *We ask God [of our understanding] to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives.* (86: 2)
- *We ask for freedom from self-will....* (87: 1)
- *Be quick to see where religious people are right.* (87: 2)

- And, there is the ***Through the day meditation / prayer*** (87: 3 - 88: 0): *...We pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day ‘Thy will be done.’* (87: 3 - 88: 0)

3.) *The power to carry that out.*

- Why do we pray only for *knowledge* of God's will for us and *the power to carry that out*? (59: 2)
- How does humility apply to this?

IV DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 11 PRINCIPLES

- How may I remember that I am not in charge of the world?
- How may I have the faith and courage that I will be given the power to live according to my higher power’s will?
- How may I relax my grasp on all distracting thoughts and plans and feelings?
- How may I pass-on to others my inner knowing of creation’s deep wish of well being for me and others?
- How may I make a commitment to the practice of regular meditation and prayer?
- Have I meditated and prayed today?

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III TAKE STEP ELEVEN ON A DAILY BASIS.

We take Step 11 in the first three paragraphs on page 86.
We ask God [of our understanding].... (86: 1, 2, 3)

According to the Big Book and under the conditions of this day, we practice Step 11 on a daily basis.

Take Step 11 in the manner that you and your group see fit. Some recite the Step or read an 11th Step prayer.

STEP 11 MEDITATION / PRAYER

[Optional: RELAX and RECEIVE THE WISH FOR WELL-BEING

Relax

Relax the body. Relax the breathing. Relax the mind.

As though lying on a sunlit beach, let us relax and breathe deeply of the spiritual atmosphere.... (12&12, p. 100: 1)

Relax the body

- Let the body arrive here at this place. Sit quietly and comfortably. You may have your eyes closed or open.
- Deeply relax all your muscles, beginning at your feet and progressing up to your face.
- Let all bodily sensations come and go; let them settle naturally in their own way.
- Surrender to the natural power of the body; feel it embody you.

Relax the breathing

- Let the breath be here.
- Let the breath come and go under its own natural power.
- Feel it all the way in, all the way out, breathing you.
- You may pay attention to your breathing. You may count or repeat your own word or phrase or prayer silently to yourself as you exhale.

Relax the mind

- Let the mind be here.
- Notice any grasping to the thinking mechanism in your mind. Let that release itself, permitting thoughts and sensations to come and to go, to arise and to dissolve under their own power.
- Let go of the thoughts – as letting go of kite strings.
- Let the thoughts go – as snow flakes melting into an open winter pond.
- When you notice your mind wandering (it will), you may notice it and passively bring your attention back to your breathing. Take your mind and lead it gently back.
- Rest in that space at the end of breathing out, before the next breath.
- Thus let the mind unfurl and fall utterly open – at ease, free of focus, with the gaze of your eyes totally expansive.

Practice for approximately 20 minutes once or twice a day (or at least 3-4 times per week).]

[Optional: RELAX and RECEIVE THE WISH FOR WELL-BEING

Receive the wish for well-being

Relax. Think beautiful thoughts. Pass it on.

*God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change,
Courage to change the things we can,
And wisdom to know the difference. (12&12, p. 125: 2)*

Relax

- Sit in a relaxed way. Relax the body. Relax the breathing. Relax the mind.

Think beautiful thoughts

- Imagine the faces of the ones (great figures, people, family, teachers, pets, places) who made you feel welcome, comfortable, and included; who wished the deepest well-being for you.
- Bathe in the loving energy of that wish for you to have deepest well-being, happiness and joy. Bask in the radiance. Feel it and take it in, like a contented cat stretching out on a sun-drenched carpet.
- Accept it no matter what you think you deserve, or what you think of them. Trust this loving wish more than the limiting thoughts of yourself and others.
- Receive its healing radiance – like a gentle shower into every part of your mind and body, from head to toe.
- After a little while, join with those who wish you well, saying over and over about yourself:
- "May this one have deepest well-being, happiness and joy." (x 3+)
- After some time, relax into that loving radiance, beyond separation of self and others.

Pass it on

- After some time, while receiving the others' wish for your well-being, now also channel and extend that wish to another – sensing them as similar to you in their layers of suffering, and wish to be free of it. Pass it on, over and over:
- "May this one have deepest well-being, happiness and joy." (x 3+)
- Feel the power of this practice to pull you beyond your own self-grasping patterns of suffering, and to open you toward the deep tranquility and goodness of your inmost being.

Practice for approximately 20 minutes once or twice a day (or at least 3-4 times per week).]