

The 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for the knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry the message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

ADDICTION AND GRACE: WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE 12 STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Session One: Introduction

Texts: Richard Rohr, "Breathing Under Water"

Forward by Anne LaMotte

- 1. Addiction is a spiritual disease, a disease of the soul, an illness resulting from longing, frustrated desire and a deep dissatisfaction – which is ironically, the necessary beginning of any spiritual path. 110**
- 2. The reason that AA has been more successful than most churches in actually helping and changing people's lives is that it treats addiction both spiritually and as an illness.**
- 3. The 12 Step Program teaches that addiction emerges out of a 'lack of inner experience of intimacy with oneself, with God, with life, with the moment.**
- 4. 'Stinking thinking is the universal addiction'.**
- 5. We are all spiritually powerless, however, not just those who are physically addicted to a substance;;;Alcoholics, (over eaters, drug addicts etc) just have their powerlessness visible for all to see. The rest of us disguise it in different ways and overcompensate for our more hidden and subtle addictions and attachments, especially our addiction to our own way of thinking. RR**

Richard Rohr: Introduction to Breathing Under Water, based on a series of talks given linking the Wisdom of the 12 Step Program to the 'marrow of the Gospel'.

1. There are similar messages between the two teachings that assure me we are dealing with a common inspiration from the Holy Spirit, from the same collective unconscious. In fact, I am still convinced that, on the practical and transformational level the Gospel message and the 12 Step Message of Bill Wilson, are largely the same message, even in some detail. Xix
2. Anne W Schaef: our society itself shows all the signs of classic addiction.
3. It is helpful to see sin, like addiction, as a disease, a very destructive disease..If sin indeed made God unhappy, it was because God desires nothing more than our happiness and *wills* the healing of our disease.
4. Jesus Christ was certainly almost primarily a healer.
5. We cannot stop the drowning waters of our addictive culture from rising, but we must at least see our reality for what it is, and seek to detach from it.
6. Religion, especially the Christian religion, lost its earthly, material, physical interests, which 'leaves it little to say about how God actually loves the world into wholeness.'
7. How can we look at the 12 Step Program spiritually? 'The experience of powerlessness is where we must all begin'. Xxiv Powerlessness, the state of the shipwrecked, is an experience we all share anyway.'