

**IF YOU WANT TO CONTINUE DRINKING,  
THAT'S YOUR BUSINESS.**

**IF YOU WANT TO STOP DRINKING,  
THAT'S OUR BUSINESS.**



**PENNSYLVANIA**  
**Washington & Greene Counties**

**District 14, Area 60**

***MEETING IN A POCKET***

rev 11/15

**[www.district14.info](http://www.district14.info)**

# Serenity Prayer

God grant me

The serenity to accept  
the things I cannot change;

The courage to change  
the things I can;

And the wisdom to know  
the difference.

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## **The Alcoholics Anonymous Preamble**

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

## How It Works

Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves.

There are such unfortunates. They are not at fault; they seem to have been born that way. They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. Their chances are less than average. There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.

Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it—then you are ready to take certain steps.

At some of these we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.

Remember that we deal with alcohol—cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power—that One is God. May you find Him now!

Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked His protection and care with complete abandon.

Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery:

*(continued)*

# The Twelve Steps

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 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 this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

*(“How It Works” continued)*

## How It Works *(con't)*

Many of us exclaimed, “What an order! I can’t go through with it.”

Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

Our description of the alcoholic, the chapter to the agnostic, and our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:

- a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.
- b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.
- c) That God could and would if He were sought.

### **To Stay Sober**

Don't Drink.

Go to Meetings.

Read the Big Book.

Get a Sponsor.

Work the Steps.

Help another Alcoholic.

### **The Four Absolutes**

**Honesty**

Is it true or is it false?

**Unselfishness**

How will this affect others?

**Love**

Is it ugly or is it beautiful?

**Purity**

Is it right or is it wrong?

# The Twelve Traditions

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

## **The Promises of A.A.**

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. The feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us – sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.



## **A Vision for You**

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 is still sick. The answers will come, if your own house is in order.

But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven't got. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us.

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

May God bless you and keep you until then.



## The Tenth Step Questions

1. How was I resentful?
2. How was I selfish, egotistical, or self-seeking?
3. How was I dishonest?
4. How was I afraid?
5. Do I owe an apology?
6. Have I wrongly kept secret?
7. Was I unkind, cruel, harsh, or unfeeling?
8. Was I unloving, cold, or indifferent?
9. What could I have done better?
10. Was I thinking of myself most of the time?
11. Was I thinking of what I could do for others?
12. Was I thinking what I could pack into the stream of life?

Who did I help today?  
What did I accomplish today?  
What I am grateful for today?  
Who needs my prayers today?

## 12 Step Prayers

### ***Step 1*** (p. 46)

God, Creative Intelligence, Universal Mind, Spirit of Nature or Spirit of the Universe my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm a real alcoholic ... and I need your help today.

### ***Step 2*** (p. 59)

God, I'm standing at the turning point right now. Give me your protection and care as I abandon myself to you and give up my old ways and my old ideas just for today.

### ***Step 3*** (p. 63)

God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!

*God, Take my will and my life. Guide me in my recovery. Show me how to live. (p. 59)*

## 12 Step Prayers *(con't)*

### **Step 4**

#### **When in Doubt** (p.13)

"I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me. Never was I to pray for myself, except as my requests bore on my usefulness to others. Then only might I expect to receive. But that would be in great measure."

#### **When I am Disturbed by the Conduct (Symptoms) of Others** (p. 67)

This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done.

*God help me to show this person the same tolerance, pity and patience that I would Cheerfully grant a sick friend. This is a sick person, how can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done. (see above and p. 141 of 12&12)*

#### **When Afraid** (p. 68)

God, relieve me of this fear and direct my attention to what you would have me be.

### **Step 5** (p. 75)

God I thank you from the bottom of my heart that I know you better. Help me become aware of anything I have omitted discussing with another person. Help me to do what is necessary to walk a free man at last.

## **12 Step Prayers (con't)**

### ***Step 6*** (p. 76)

God help me become willing to let go of all the things to which I still cling. Help me to be ready to let You remove all of these defects, that Your will and purpose may take their place.

### ***Step 7*** (p. 76)

My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding.

### ***Step 8*** (p. 76)

God help me to become willing to sweep away the debris of self will and self reliant living. Thy will be done for this person as well as for me.

### ***Step 9*** (p. 78-80)

God give me the strength and direction to do the right thing no matter what the consequences may be. Help me to consider others and not harm them in any way. Help me to consult with others before I take any actions that would cause me to be sorry. Help me to not repeat such behaviors. Show me the way of Patience, Tolerance, Kindliness, and Love and help me live the spiritual life.

## 12 Step Prayers *(con't)*

### **Step 10** (p. 84-5)

God remove the selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear that has cropped up in my life right now. Help me to discuss this with someone immediately and make amends quickly if I have harmed anyone. Help me to cease fighting anything and anyone. Show me where I may be helpful to someone else. Help me react sanely; not cocky or afraid. How can I best serve You — Your will, not mine be done.

*How can I best serve Thee—Thy will (not mine) be done. (p. 85)*

### **Step 11** (p. 87-8)

God, I'm agitated and doubtful right now. Help me to stop and remember that I've made a decision to let You be my God. Give me the right thoughts and actions. God save me from fear, anger, worry, self-pity, or foolish decisions that Your will not mine be done.

### **Step 12** (p. 89)

Dear God, Having had a spiritual experience, I must now remember that "faith without works is dead." And *practical experience* shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. So, God, please help me to carry this message to other alcoholics! Provide me with the guidance and wisdom to talk with another alcoholic because I can help when no one else can. Help me secure his confidence and remember he is ill.

## **Responsibility Pledge of A.A.**

I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that, I am responsible!

*This **Meeting in a Pocket** is not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., or with the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous. The publication of this booklet has not been authorized or endorsed by, and does not imply affiliation with Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., or with the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous.*

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## **Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi**

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace.

That where there is hatred, I may bring love;

That where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness;

That where there is discord, I may bring harmony;

That where there is error, I may bring truth;

That where there is doubt, I may bring faith;

That where there is despair, I may bring hope;

That where there are shadows, I may bring light;

That where there is sadness, I may bring joy.

Lord, grant that I may seek rather

to comfort than to be comforted;

to understand, than to be understood;

to love, than to be loved.

For it is by self-forgetting that one finds;

It is by forgiving that one is forgiven;

It is by dying that one awakens to Eternal Life.

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## Names & Numbers


## **How to Have a Good Day**

Take time to laugh:

It is the music of the soul.

Take time to think:

It is the source of all power.

Take time to play:

It is the source of perpetual youth.

Take time to read:

It is the fountain of wisdom.

Take time to pray:

It is the greatest power on Earth.

Take time to love and be loved:

It is a God-given privilege.

Take time to be friendly:

It is the road to happiness.

Take time to give:

It is too short a day to be selfish.

Take time to work:

It is the price of success.