

Chapter 5 : **HOW IT WORKS**

(pages 58 – 71)

By the time we get to Chapter 5, “HOW IT WORKS,” we have a clear understanding of what the Problem is – *Powerlessness* -- and what the Solution is -- God, *as we understand Him – the Power that can do for us that which we could not do for ourselves*. Now all we need to know is what we must do to recover from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body and *precisely* how do we do it. We will receive our first set of clear-cut directions in this Chapter. These directions will be for Steps Three and Four.

When Bill W. began to write this Chapter, he realized he was without some vital information. He had the six precepts that the “Alcoholic Squad of the Oxford Group” had developed from their experience. These can be found on page xvi and, again, in the Fourth Edition, on page 263. They are:

1. Complete deflation.
2. Dependence and guidance from a Higher Power.
3. Moral inventory.
4. Confession.
5. Restitution.
6. Continued work with other alcoholics.

He believed these were not sufficiently complete for a person alone in this world of ours, so he prayed. Bill said that he laid his pad and pencil on the night stand by his bed - then asked for guidance through prayer and meditation. After some time, he picked up the pad and pencil and started writing. His hand seemed to flow on its own, he said. After writing for about 30 minutes, he stopped and read what he had written. He placed numbers by the “Steps” and was both surprised and very pleased to see that the six had become twelve. Bill believed this significant because of the Twelve Apostles.

Being the Basic Text for our Fellowship, it will tell us WHEN to take a Step, HOW to take the Step and WHAT the results will be. It also reminds us WHY we must take the Steps.

We often hear, “There are no ‘musts’ in Alcoholics Anonymous.” If they are referring to the FELLOWSHIP that is almost true. There is only one “must” to be a member of Alcoholics Anonymous and that is a desire, a longing, a yearning to stop drinking for good and all. That is a “must.” But each person coming to Alcoholics Anonymous seeking help has the freedom to adopt our PROGRAM as a way of life and thereby come to comprehend the word serenity and know peace or to ignore the PROGRAM and return to drinking and die or go permanently insane.

The Program of Alcoholics Anonymous, however, contains many “musts,” “have to,” “had to,” etc.. Certainly, the program is a suggested program. If you have tried everything else and kept on drinking, we “suggest” you try ours. Why? ***RARELY HAVE WE SEEN A PERSON FAIL WHO HAS THOROUGHLY FOLLOWED THE DIRECTIONS IN THIS BOOK.***

Now let’s find out how we begin to recover by taking Steps Three & Four following the directions in this Chapter.

We recover by the Steps we take, not the meetings we make.

REVIEW OF THE 12 STEPS

- STEP 1: Identification of the Problem
- STEP 2: Identification of the Solution
- STEP 3: Committed to a Course of Action
- STEP 4: Implemented a Plan of Action
- STEP 5: Faced Our Defects
- STEP 6: Recognized the Necessity to Be Free of those Defects
- STEP 7: Asked God to Convert Those Defects into Assets & Began Accepting Responsibility for our *Daily* Actions & Behaviors
- STEP 8: Accepted Responsibility for Our *Past* Behavior and Actions
- STEP 9: Made Peace with Our Fellow Man
- STEP 10: Our Daytime Walking Around Step
- STEP 11: Our Start & End the Day -- and everything in between -- develop a Sixth Sense of God Consciousness Step
- STEP 12: The Promise, Charge and Challenge