

An Understanding of THE 12 STEPS OF SA

We were once asked what was meant by the reference to “these principles” as they are mentioned in our 12th Step. After discussing this question, it seemed to us that “These Principles” were something suggested or arrived at by working the Steps. The Steps were the tools to be used to discover the “Principles”. Of course this is a program of action and a personal thing – an individual program – so each person will probably find their own principles for themselves.

After much meditation, we have discovered the following principles have greatly helped us to understand and practice our program. When all these principles are given meaning and purpose through LOVE – LOVE OF GOD OR OF OUR HIGHER POWER, OF OUR FELLOWS, AND RESPECT FOR OURSELVES, then they truly become the heart of our program of SA. With a deep sense of gratitude and the help of a Power greater than ourselves, we can live in emotional and physical sobriety with serenity and comfort one day at a time.

In working the 1st Step, when we “admitted we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable,” we had at last found the courage to face the truth and tell it; we were practicing the principle of HONESTY.

In working the 2nd Step, when we “came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity,” we were practicing the principle of HOPE.

In working the 3rd Step, when we “made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of a higher power or God, *as we understood the higher power or God*,” we were practicing the principle of FAITH.

In working the 4th Step, when we “made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves,” we were practicing the principle of COURAGE.

In working the 5th Step, when we “admitted to God or our higher power, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs,” we were practicing the principle of INTEGRITY.

In working the 6th Step, when we “were entirely ready to have God or our higher power remove all these defects of character,” we were practicing the principles of WILLINGNESS.

In working the 7th Step, when we “humbly asked God or our higher power to remove our shortcomings,” we were practicing the principle of HUMILITY.

In working the 8th Step, when we “made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all,” we were practicing the principles of LOVE AND FORGIVENESS.

In working the 9th Step, when we “made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others, we were practicing the principle of JUSTICE.

In working the 10th Step, when we “continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it,” we were practicing the principle of PERSEVERENCE.

In working the 11th Step, when we “sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God or our higher power, *as we understood God or our higher power*, praying only for knowledge of God’s or our higher power’s will for us and the power to carry it out,” we were practicing the principle of SPIRITUAL AWARENESS

In working the 12th Step, when “having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other shoplifting and stealing addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs,” we were practicing the principle of SERVICE.