

The 12th Step Principles or "The Divine Truths of the 12th Step"

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and practice these principals in all our affairs.

Many of us think we actually know what the "principles" of the 12th step are when, in fact we really don't know all of them (other than they refer to the 12 steps). Some of us may know some of them and practice them with great diligence and fervor. Others of us know all of them and rarely practice them. The truth is that we should all know all of them, and practice them with daily regularity. The 12th step does say to "practice these principles in all our affairs". That means our whole lives, daily, always, and everywhere. Let's take a look at the 12th step principles and review exactly what they are (the principles of the steps,... not the steps themselves).

1. I am an alcoholic (always, every day, and everywhere). My sobriety is my responsibility, not somebody else's.
2. First things first (God, self, family, and community). Prioritizing our lives is essential to a successful 12 step program.
3. Easy does it (but do it). Slow cooked sobriety is always the most pleasant to have, and the most pleasant to be around.
4. There but for the grace of God go I. Being humble, and non-judgmental of others is the key. I only know where I've been, I don't know where others have been.
5. One day at a time. Stay in today. The past cannot be changed, and the future is uncertain.
6. Acceptance. Accept reality, and see it for what it is. Acceptance triumphs unsolvable problems through knowledge of our powerlessness.
7. Resentment (our number one cause of relapse). High expectations of people, places, or things are the building blocks of resentments.
8. Honesty (the cure for memory loss). Being truthful enables us to be on the same footing as others, and allows true bonds to form.
9. Decisiveness (making it happen). Practicing making decisions builds pathways in our brains that allow us to make decisions affecting our sobriety, and our lives without hesitation.
10. Paradox of giving. In giving we receive, and in 12 step work the results are immediate but not always noticed until later on.
11. Action is the magic word. The 12 steps are all written in the past-tense using action verbs. Philosophy doesn't solve problems, it thinks about them.
12. Strength from weakness. Destitution and despair bring us closer to God through our weakness. We receive God's Grace from this weakness thereby making us strong.
13. Meditation. Think about the truth of God, and His will for us.
14. The Lord's Prayer. The seven principles of the Lord's Prayer:
 - He is our Father (Father to all of us).
 - His house is Heaven (Holy and Spiritual).
 - His name is Holy and is revered above all names.
 - His Will is everything.
 - He gives us our daily sustenance.
 - He forgives us as we forgive others like a true Father.
 - He protects us from evil and temptation.

15. No person starts at the top. We are all made low to be qualified to be in recovery. If we weren't we wouldn't be here.
16. We are not different from one another. As humans we are the same, and we suffer from the same human frailties as others do.
17. Selfish program of recovery. Our recovery is our responsibility. Take care of ourselves first, and then take care of others. Forgive ourselves first so we can forgive others.
18. Primacy of the Spiritual. Nothing really matters but God. Always remember to place the Spiritual side of life above all other things. God is the prime reason for all we do.

Since we know what the principles of the 12th step are now,... we should be able to incorporate them into all our daily affairs, right? That is easier said, than done. Because we believe in progress, not perfection, we can realize progress in this area but not mastery. The more we practice these principles the more we involuntarily incorporate them into our lives. This is what truly makes the 12th step a pleasure to work. This is what makes recovery possible.

- *Anonymous* -