

12 Steps@Trinity



Principles Above Personalities

April 1, 2021

Make use of what we offer...

...if not members of religious bodies we sometimes select and memorize a few sets of prayers which emphasize the principles we have been discussing. There are many helpful books also. Suggestions about these may be obtained from one's priest, minister, or rabbi. Be quick to see where religious people are right. Make use of what they offer.

~Alcoholics Anonymous Pg. 87

To us, the Realm of Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe, to all.

~Alcoholics Anonymous Pg. 46

12 Steps for All

1. We admitted that our lives had become unmanageable and uncontrollable.
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 that.
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 God 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 that, praying only for knowledge of God's 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 others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

12 Steps@Trinity

12-Step Spirituality is not a defined body of wisdom or particular collection of books and sayings. Indeed, the steps are rooted in a tradition much older and extending back millennia through the Judeo-Christian-Islamic religions. The Steps are now used by hundreds of different kinds of recovery groups and millions of people throughout the world. We could even say that 12-Step Spirituality is the combined knowledge and experience of all those who have used spiritual surrender and 12 Steps as a passage to recovery, and the things they have learned along the way. We are fortunate to include in our community many who have journeyed toward liberation with the 12 Steps and so we look to share what we have learned, as well as celebrate the presence of God in our midst.

A Centering Prayer

Let us pray together:

**Gracious and eternal God,
so draw our hearts to you,
so guide our minds,
so fill our imaginations,
so control our wills,
that we may be wholly yours,
utterly dedicated to you;
and then use us, we pray,
as you will, and always to your glory
and the welfare of your people;
through Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.**

First Reading

I will keep an open mind toward each person I encounter today. If I am ready to learn, anyone can be my teacher.

A suggested meeting closing says that “though you may not like all of us, you’ll love us in a very special way – the same way we already love you.” In other words, every meeting can be an opportunity to practice placing principles above personalities. Most of us are highly aware of the personalities of people around us. Instead of getting lost in petty likes and dislikes, it is important to remember why we come to meetings. We all need each other in order to recover.

I don’t have to like everybody, but I want to look deeper to find the spirit that we share in common. Perhaps I can find peace with each person by reminding myself of those things that draw us together – a common interest, a common belief, a common goal. I will then have a resource for strength rather than a target for negative thinking. I will have placed principles above personalities.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

12Steps@Trinity is offered as a worship experience rooted in the spiritual wisdom of the twelve-steps, which themselves are rooted in the ancient spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius.

Courage to Change

Second Reading

Each of us puts the Twelve Steps of Recovery into practice in our lives as best we can, moving at the pace that is right for us. That is why I avoid speaking harshly, using phrases such as “get off the pity-pot” or “quit feeling sorry for yourself.” Perhaps someone needs more time to work through a painful situation than I do. Their story may sound repetitious to me, but who am I to judge?

Courage to
Change

When I am struggling with my difficulties, I am so grateful that no one in Recovery stands over me with a stopwatch, telling me that I am taking too long when I learn my lessons slowly. A nonjudgmental, listening ear can be a great blessing and I am learning to offer it more freely.

The open door to helpful answers is communication based on love. Such communication depends on awareness of and respect for each other’s well-being and willingness to accept in another what may not measure up to my own standards and expectations. Today I will try to extend to my fellow members the respect, patience, and courtesy that I want for myself.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

First Prayer

Let us pray together.

—Attributed to
St. Francis

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

*Growth begins
when we start to
accept our own
weakness.
Jean Vanier*

Third Reading

Complacency is an enemy, easy to recognize in others but difficult to admit in ourselves. It is rarely listed among the major human faults, yet it can hinder us in every form of personal growth.

Complacency simply means being sure we are right, taking it for granted that our view couldn't possibly be wrong. It means judging others by what we think is right. It blocks our understanding and kindness and justifies qualities in ourselves that we wouldn't find tolerable in other people. Smug complacency is often at the root of family dissension.

Let me not be quite so sure that my thinking is always correct. Let me begin by being a little critical of my iron resolution to have things my way. I will keep my ears and my mind open to the ideas of others, even when they don't square with mine. Then I will be opening the door to growth.

My serenity does not depend on my winning every round in my battle with life. It does depend on my acceptance of others on their own terms. God grant me that serenity.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.
Amen.

Second Prayer

Let us pray together.

**Thank you for our time in community,
for deep, if fleeting friendships,
for those conversations late at night,
for the vulnerable intensity lubricated by laughter
for the freedom to serve others
and to affirm ourselves
in the face of all that you know and we know of our lives.
And we thank you for any signs that the churches,
from which so many are disaffected,
can yet be your body on earth in the community of creation.
Amen.**

Musical Interlude

One Day at a
Time in Al-Anon

— Kathy
Galloway of the
Iona Community

*Love is the
only sane and
satisfactory
answer to
the problem
of human
existence.
Erich Fromm*

Reflection

The reflection seeks to be evocative not prescriptive, so there is no expectation that you will agree with the homilist. Instead, allow the reflection to lead you into your own contemplation and feel free to follow your own inner voice rather than remaining focused on what the homilist is saying. Sometimes our journeys converge and sometimes they diverge. Enjoy!

Candle Lighting and Meditation

The meditation will be a brief period of quiet to allow us to center and quiet the mind. Please feel free to participate with whatever method you prefer.

Sharing Reflections

The Serenity Prayer

Let us pray together.

**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;
living one day at a time;
enjoying one moment at a time;
accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is,
not as I would have it;
trusting that you will make all things right
if I surrender to your will;
that I may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you in the next.
Amen.**

The Peace

The earliest Christians shared a kiss or embrace as a sign of solidarity and reconciliation among those in spiritual community with one another. We continue that tradition with a common greeting:

**The Peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.**

*We are quick
enough at
perceiving and
weighing what
we suffer from
others, but we
mind not what
others suffer
from us.*

Thomas à Kempis

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

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Thank you for your participation and contribution. Peace.

*I have learned
silence from
the talkative;
tolerance from
the intolerant;
and kindness
from the unkind.
I should not be
ungrateful to
those teachers.
Kahlil Gibran*

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