

12 Steps@Trinity



Gaining Wisdom

July 30, 2020

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.

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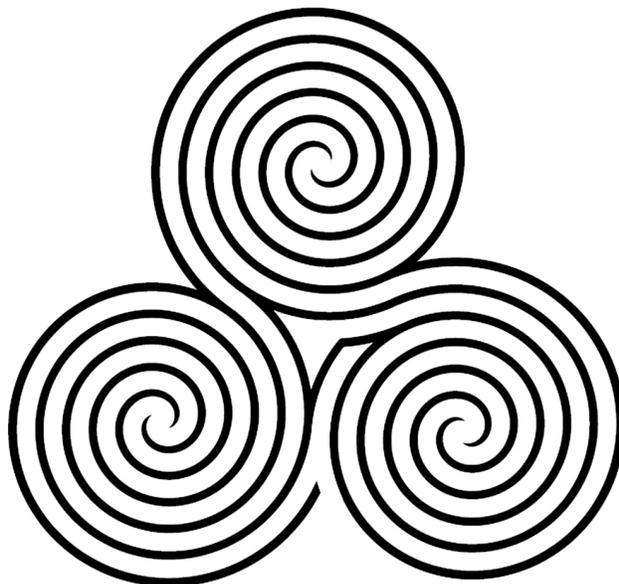
12-Step Spirituality is not a defined body of wisdom or particular collection of books and sayings. Indeed, the steps are rooted in a tradition much older and extending back millennia through the Judeo-Christian-Islamic religions. The Steps are now used by hundreds of different kinds of recovery groups 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.**

Musical Interlude



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.

The Promise of
a New Day

First Reading

Understanding circumstances, other people, even ourselves comes with the passage of time and our willingness to be open to all the lessons contained within a moment. We must be willing to participate fully in the events that have requested our attendance. Then we can discover the longed-for clarity about life and our role in it. Immersion in the moment accompanied by reflective quiet times promises a perspective that offers wisdom.

We all long for happiness, an easier life, and wisdom. We learn so slowly that both happiness and the easier life are generally matters of attitude. Therein lies our sought-after wisdom. How much simpler it makes living through even our most feared experiences when we have acquired the wisdom to know that the mind we carry into the moment, any moment, will be reflected in the outcome.

It takes patience and willingness to live fully enough to reap the benefits that accompany wisdom.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

Second Reading

All of the recovery tools I have learned and used have pointed me down the path to gaining wisdom. For me wisdom means knowing when to stop and listen to myself and to my Higher Power rather than rushing into a decision or action. I used to think I always had to do something and that waiting was a waste of time. Now I know God speaks to me while I'm waiting.

Hope for Today

Wisdom means being patient with myself and others. I used to blame myself for everything. Now I can practice the slogan "Think." Maybe I don't need to be responsible for this situation. Maybe this other person doesn't need to be responsible for it, either. Maybe we are all doing the best we can with what we know right now.

*He knew all
that learning
ever writ
Knew only this
– that he knew
nothing yet.
Aphra Behn*

Wisdom means knowing I can't live life in isolation. I need others. I need the love of other humans who make mistakes, understand my being human, and still love me. I also need the love and guidance of the God who created me. He is always with me, and when I call on Him, He will answer.

Wisdom means learning to mine the diamonds hidden in my problems. I used to waste precious time being depressed about how alone and unloved I was. I was blind to everything beautiful around me and ungrateful for my blessings. Now when life hands me rocks, I use the program to polish them into valuable gems.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

First Prayer

Let us pray together.

**My God, I have always thought
that growing stronger in spirit
would mean becoming invincible, beyond need.
Now I see you are teaching me
to receive another kind of strength
when I come to the end of mine.
Teach me to walk in your ways
as I have never known them before. Amen.**

Musical Interlude

In keeping with the 7th Tradition, you are invited to make a financial contribution for the support of Trinity and this service. You might want to wait until after the service, but you can make an offering by mailing a check to church, or using your bank's electronic banking features. Alternatively, you can make an [online donation here](#). You can also mail a check to Trinity at 371 Delaware Ave., Buffalo, NY 14202. Thank you!

Third Reading

The wisdom embodied in the Serenity Prayer was a foreign concept when I walked into my first Twelve Step meeting. I soon realized it must be important because every meeting I attended since has used it as part of the opening. Applying it to my recovery seemed a worthwhile endeavor.

In the Serenity Prayer I ask my Higher Power to grant me “wisdom to know the difference” between the “things I cannot change” and the “things I can.” Before Recovery I was unable to distinguish between the two. In fact, I think I had them absolutely backwards, often struggling to manage events that were beyond my ability to influence, let alone control. Such behavior usually led to mental, physical, and emotional fatigue as well as feelings of depression, failure, and worthlessness. These feelings became familiar as I matured in my alcoholic family, and I grudgingly came to accept them as normal.

Now, thanks to working the Twelve Steps, I know I'm powerless over alcohol and alcoholic behavior. I know I'm a valuable, worthwhile person whose struggles resulted from the seemingly senseless events in my life. My illusion of control helped me survive, but I don't need it now.

Although uncomfortable feelings and the urge to rule crop up occasionally, I remind myself that this is part of my disease and that feelings aren't facts. I admit my powerlessness once again and turn my unhealthy reactions over to my Higher Power. Not only can She manage my life better than I can, She can also restore me to sanity.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

—David Hazard,
You Set My Spirit
Free

*One cannot have
wisdom without
living life.
Dorothy McCall*

Hope for Today

— *Ubi Caritas* —
An ancient prayer

*I'll have the
answers I need,
when I need
them, if I turn
within for them.*
**The Promise of a
New Day**

Second Prayer

Let us pray together.

**Where charity and love are, God is there.
God's love has gathered us into one.
Let us rejoice and be pleased.
Let us fear, and let us love the living God.
And may we love each other with a sincere heart.**

**Where charity and love are, God is there.
As we are gathered into one body,
Beware, lest we be divided in mind.
Let evil impulses stop, let controversy cease,
And may our God be in our midst.**

**Where charity and love are, God is there.
And may we with the saints also,
See your face in glory, O God:
The joy that is immense and good,
For ever and ever. Amen.**

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!

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.

Reconciliation, Release, and Reclamations

A Thursday@7 tradition, you are invited to symbolically come forward to offer your prayer for the reconciliation of a fractured relationship, the release of a resentment, or the reclamation of lost hopes and dreams.

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.

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.**

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



12-Steps@7

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