

WESTBORO BIG BOOK STUDY TAPE GROUP

All Saints Anglican Church

Saturday Morning 9:00 a.m.

347 Richmond Road (near Churchill)

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Step 10

(Tape 7 - 00:49.32.7)

J & C Now if that's true then what is the purpose of the last three steps? And many people will tell us that the last three steps are to maintain our sobriety. I will agree that they will help us stay sober. But the word maintenance itself is a misnomer. To maintain something is means to keep it "as is". And another natural law applies.

Nothing in our universe ever stays "as is".
Everything in our universe is in a constant state of change.
It's either growing or it's dying.
It's progressing or it's regressing.
It's going forward or it's going back.

Now we've made a tremendous amount of spiritual growth through the first nine steps is we've got the promises. But if we tried to maintain this eventually we start slipping back. And we start having trouble with people. Then with ourself. Then with God. And we end up drunk all over again. Now how do I know that? I see it happen in AA over and over and over and over again. That's what happens when people like us had a good program go back and get drunk again it's because we stopped growing. And we can't stop growing. If you do you start dying. Let's look at the last three steps. Not as just maintenance steps. Not just to keep us sober, but to see if we don't actually continue to grow in our relationship with God, with ourselves and with other human beings.

Twice in the book Bill has mentioned a fourth dimension of existence.

Once in his story. Once in Chapter 2. A dimension of living far beyond the normal three. You can't explain it. You can't describe it. You can only feel it. And that's what the last three steps do. Move us into another dimension of living. Let's look at them for just a few minutes.

You know one of the things that we did, as a fellowship is we took the steps out of the book and we put them on these little cards and put them on the wall. And if you look at step 10 on this card or on the wall and by the way we left the instructions on how to work the steps in the book. People come into AA and look at the wall and try to work the steps off the wall without instructions. No wonder they get in trouble. Step 10, off the wall or off the cards says

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

And it looked like if we just continued to take a little inventory and if we were wrong promptly admitted it we would be doing the intended step 10. And somehow or other we got the idea that we do that at night. Well the nighttime portion is over in step 11 it's not in step 10. And Charlie and I have discussed this at great detail. We don't get in trouble at night in bed any more. We need a daytime walking around step. So let's look at step 10 in a different light.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 "This thought brings us to step ten, which suggests we continue to take personal inventory and continue to set right any new mistakes as we go along. We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past. We have entered the world of Spirit. "

J & C We've had a spiritual awakening.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 cont. "Our next function is to grow "

J & C To grow, not maintain, not stay where we are, but to grow.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 cont. "in understanding and effectiveness. This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime. Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear. "

J & C What step did we use to look at that in the first place. Anybody remember? Step 4? OK.

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Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 cont. "When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them. "

J & C What steps did we use there? 6 and 7. Alright.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 cont. "We discuss them with someone immediately "

J & C And what step was that? 5. OK.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 cont. "and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. "

J & C What steps did we use there? 8 and 9.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 cont. "Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others is our code."

J & C It looks to me like if we follow the directions in the book then we will be doing steps 4,5,6,7,8 and 9 every day, on a daily basis, for the rest of our lives. I would defy anybody in this room to do 4,5,6,7,8 and 9 on a daily basis and stay the way you are. You absolutely can not do that. I've got that little inventory sheet right up here in my head. Just as plain as day and you do to. And what I've trained myself to do if I get screwed up at 9:00 in the morning, used to be that I'd wait till I went to bed at night to do something about it. But when I do that I've wasted another day in anger and worry and depression and etc. I finally trained myself that when I get screwed up about 9:00 I get off in the corner by myself. I say OK Charlie

"Who are you mad at?"

"What did they do to you?"

"What part of self is affected?"

"What did you do, if anything, to set it in motion?"

"Which character defect has come back to the surface?"

I can't get upset unless one of those old character defects has come back.

Selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, frightened, or inconsiderate.

I can spot it just like that. I say "OK God you know I don't want to be this way. Please take this away from me." This selfishness or this dishonesty or whatever it is. I try to discuss it with someone immediately, preferably my sponsor. Sometimes I can sometimes I can't but I try to. Then I make amends quickly if I hurt anybody in this process. 10-15-20 minutes it's all gone. The rest of the day is OK. I have wasted all the time that I want to waste in resentments and fear and anger and worry and depression and etc. I don't have to do that anymore. My God I love to feel good. I just don't want to waste any more time, what little I've got left in that other kind of jazz. I've got a tool here that works every time. And as you continue to take personal inventory as you continue to look and see who you are mad at and etc and etc and etc you're going to learn more about yourself. As you ask God to take these things away they become less and less. As you discuss them with another human being, preferably our sponsor, we know more about ourselves. As we make amends quickly our relationship with the world and everybody in it becomes better and better. You can't do step 10 the way the book says and stay the way you are. You just can't. Your relationship with God, with yourself, and with your fellow man will become better and better and better and better. A new dimension of living that we never dreamed existed.

Now be careful. This is just like 6 and 7. This is the other changing step. And if you stay fowled up you can't blame it on anybody else any longer. Cause if you're fowled up and you use step 10 you can get rid of that stuff. But if you stay fowled up and you stay angry and worried and depressed and selfish and dishonest it's got to be because that's the way you want to be. I can't blame it on anybody or God or anything else any longer. And once in a great while I like to be screwed up. There's times I like to be mad. Cause when I'm mad I can romp and stomp and raise hell with everybody around me all day long. And that gives me a comfortable feeling of superiority. And once in a while I just love it. There's times I like to be afraid. Cause I can use that to rationalize and justify not

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doing what I should do or just as importantly doing something I shouldn't do. But when I do that anymore I don't enjoy it like I used to. Somewhere about the middle of it I catch myself. And I say "OK idiot. You're doing it to yourself again". This thing really does work. And you'll continue to grow.

Now after step 10 you've got another set of promises. Let's look at them for just a moment.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 3. "And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone—even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned."

J & C Remember it said, we came to believe that a power greater than ourselves would restore us to sanity?

Well we got our sanity back on page 84 by the way.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 3 cont. "For by this time sanity will have returned. We will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame. We react sanely and normally, and will find that this has happened automatically. We see that our new attitude toward liquor has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! That is the miracle of it. We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation. We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality--safe and protected. We have not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky, nor are we afraid. That is our experience. That is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition."

J & C And again remember way back on page 45 it said that the main object of this book was to enable me to find a power greater than myself which would solve my problem. And somewhere between there and here we have the first 9 steps or 10 steps of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. And one day into 6 or 7 or 8 months of sobriety and working these steps I looked up one day and I said what happened to that desire of drink that I used to have. It's just gone. I mean it was just gone, seemingly without any effort on my part. I found the power and the power solved the problem. It was just gone. That's the miracle of it.

Now, the next to the last paragraph on page 85.

Big Book, p. 85, par. 2

Much has already been said about receiving strength, inspiration, and direction from Him who has all knowledge and power. If we have carefully followed directions, we have begun to sense the flow of His Spirit into us. To some extent we have become God-conscious. We have begun to develop this vital sixth sense. But we must go further and that means more action.

J & C In other words what's happened to us in these steps of 3 through 10 we've removed enough self-will that we are now becoming God conscious. And by now we are beginning to receive some directions from God. Now if the book says that God has all power and all direction and I believe he does the book says so. God dwells within each of us and I believe he does because the book says so. Then it really stands to reason that you and I have within ourselves all the knowledge and all the power that we could ever need to handle any situation which comes up in the future. It's called a sixth sense of direction. I've got five senses. Everything I know on a conscience level I learned from those. I can see and I can hear I can smell and I can taste and I can touch. But what little bit I've learned through my five sense of direction is just a small amount of knowledge. But if God has all knowledge and all power, if I can tap into him then I can handle any situation in the future with God's help. Whatever it might be. It's long been known. We knew that.

You develop this sixth sense of direction through prayer and meditation.

Most of us when we get here, I didn't know anything about meditation. I thought meditation is when you tried to clear you mind of all thought. And I've never been able to do that. When I wake up in the morning that sucker turns on and it will not clear out. I thought maybe it was chanting. Listening to soft music. That's probably some forms of meditation. But I knew nothing about any of it. I knew very little about prayer. Even raised in church. I only knew two prayers. One went like this.

Now I lay me down to sleep. Pray the Lord my soul to keep. And if I die before I wake.

I'm not into that prayer anymore. That's dealing with death and I don't want nothing to do with that. The other prayer that I used and I bet you used it too went like this.

God, if you get me out of this damn mess I swear I'll never do this again.

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Now I'm going to have to develop a life of prayer and meditation. Would seem to be impossible wouldn't it. Bill Wilson is faced with the job of teaching people who are spiritually bankrupt how to pray and meditate and Bill Wilson don't know how to do it either. Thank God he didn't. Cause if he had really been knowledgeable he would have written in such a manner that I could never have understood it. But he didn't know enough about it to be able to do that. What he did do is what he's done all the way through the book. He gives us some definite valuable suggestions. And he said if we will use those in our lives today we will develop our own life of prayer and meditation. He couldn't tell us how to pray and meditate but he could tell us how to develop our own. He starts for just a few moments over on page 86 he tells us what to do when we go to bed at night. Here it is now in step 11. He said

Big Book, p. 86, par. 1 "When we retire at night, we constructively review our day. Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest, or afraid? "

J & C I believe that's step 4 again isn't it?

Big Book, p. 86, par.1 cont. "Do we owe an apology? "

J & C That must be steps 8 and 9 again.

Big Book, p. 86, par. 1 cont. "Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another person at once? "

J & C I believe that's step 5 again.

Big Book, p. 86, par. 1 cont. "Were we kind and loving toward all? What could we have done better? Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time? Or were we thinking of what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life? But we must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others. After making our review we ask God's forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken. "

J & C And there is step 6 and 7 again. So what the book is really suggesting is when we go to bed at night we sit down and kind of take another little inventory. Step 10 was during the day when we're disturbed. Step 11 is before we go to bed at night.

We made up a little sheet here you could use. You can use anything you want to. The main thing is do we inventory or not?

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DAILY INVENTORY

When we retire at night,
we constructively review our day.
Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid?

PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF SELF-WILL

PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD'S WILL

SELFISH AND SELF SEEKING	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	INTEREST IN OTHERS
DISHONESTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	HONESTY
FRIGHTENED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	COURAGE
INCONSIDERATE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CONSIDERATE
PRIDE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	HUMILITY-SEEKING GOD'S WILL
GREEDY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	GIVING OR SHARING
LUSTFUL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WHAT CAN WE DO FOR OTHERS
ANGER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CALM
ENVY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	GRATEFUL
SLOTH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	TAKE ACTION
GLUTTONY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MODERATION
IMPATIENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PATIENCE
INTOLERANT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	TOLERANCE
RESENTMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FORGIVENESS
HATE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LOVE-CONCERN FOR OTHERS
HARMFUL ACTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	GOOD DEEDS
SELF-PITY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SELF-FORGETFULNESS
SELF-JUSTIFICATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	HUMILITY-SEEK GOD'S WILL
SELF-IMPORTANCE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MODESTY
SELF-CONDEMNATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SELF-FORGIVENESS
SUSPICION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	TRUST
DOUBT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FAITH

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On one side of the sheet we take the basic character defects, selfish, self-seeking, dishonest, frightened, inconsideration. We took all the other defects in the 12 and 12 which are the offshoots of those first four. We put them on the left-hand side of the sheet and called them the personality characteristics of a self-willed person. We tried to find the opposite and put them on the right hand side of the sheet and called that the personality characteristics of a God willed person. Now all we are trying to do is get from the left hand side of the sheet to the right hand side and I can sit down at night with this little sheet and run down through it making a few check marks that shows me where I've been that day. Shows we what I need to continue to work on. Never do I find myself on either side of the sheet. The check marks change locations from time to time. But I'm beginning to notice that I'm marking more of them on the right then on the left. And slowly over a period of time we continue to become a different human being. Now I've learned one thing about my sobriety. I am going to inventory. I've got one of two choices. I can put it off and put it off and put it off and put it off until I'm so sick that I'm almost drunk. And then I start trying to dig myself out from under the mess. Or I can take just a few minutes each day and by doing it a few minutes each day I keep myself in reasonably good condition. And I'm in much less chance of drinking. I find that it takes less energy to do it on a daily basis then it does to wait till I'm almost drunk and then start trying to dig myself out form under it.

A very definite valuable suggestion.

(Tape 8 - 00:06:20.0)

17 minutes