



## Coalesce Podcast

### Episode 047 – Twelve-Step Spirituality

#### Note, terms, scripture, practice



Step 1— *We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.*

Step 2— *We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.*

[Galatians 2:20](#)

Step 3— *We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God.*

[John 15:15](#)

Step 4— *We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*

[John 8:32](#)

[Colossians 2:16-23](#)

[Luke 15:11-32](#)

[Luke 18:9-14](#)

[John 1:5](#)

Step 5— *We admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.*

[Exodus 25:22](#)

Step 6— *We were entirely ready to have God remove all of these defects of character.*

Step 7— *We humbly asked [God] to remove our shortcomings.*

[Matthew 13:29](#)

[Matthew 7:7](#)

[Luke 6:38](#)

Step 8— *We made a list of all the persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.*

[Mark 8:34](#)

Step 9— *We made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*

[Romans 1:29-31](#)

Step 10— *We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.*

[Jeremiah 31:33](#)

[Romans 2:15](#)

[1 Corinthians 2:10-16](#)

[Ephesians 4:23](#)

Step 11— *We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for the knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.*

[Mark 8:34](#)

[John 14:14](#)

[John 15: 4-5](#)

[John 4: 10-14](#)

[Colossians 3:3-4](#)

Step 12— *Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

[Luke 22:31-32](#)

[James 2:17](#)

[James 1:25](#)

[Matthew 25:40](#)

## Practice: Working the Steps

Coming to trust and surrender to our Higher Power is the work of a lifetime, even as mercy flows instantaneously to us. The Twelve Steps require us to both work and to undergo grace. I invite you to begin wherever you are. It might take you a day or a month or more to take each step with the support of someone you trust. Just begin. And each day commit to beginning again.

Remember that as humans, we are all addicted to our way of thinking. A regular practice of contemplative prayer is the oil that greases the wheels of transformation. Include daily meditation as part of your program for whatever addiction you are facing.

The following questions, adapted from the *Breathing Under Water Companion Journal*, [1] may help you take each of the steps deeper. Take your time in reflecting, journaling, and sharing with others.

Step 1: When have you experienced being powerless in your everyday life? How much do you depend on your own strength and abilities? Name at least one area where you feel like you might be reaching “the limits of your own fuel supply.”

Step 2: Where do you instinctively make decisions—your head, heart, or gut? Which do you consider the most trustworthy? Imagine a dialogue with one of these three areas of your being. What would it tell you about your need to be more open?

Step 3: Surrender will always feel like dying, and yet it is the necessary path to liberation. Write about what the word *surrender* conjures in your mind and heart. How is this influenced by your personal experiences? How is it influenced by society’s perspective?

Step 4: What part of you do you not want to see? What are you afraid will happen if you’re honest with yourself? Can you begin to imagine being free of that fear?

Step 5: When did someone love you in spite of your actions? How did that make you feel? How did it make you want to be a better person?

Step 6: Are you more comfortable with acting or waiting? What happens if you approach a problem from a stance opposite the one you normally prefer?

Step 7: When have you tried to eliminate a fault, only to have it reappear later? How might you be more patient with yourself and your faults? How can you begin to see failure as an opportunity to grow?

Step 8: What relationships would you like to redo? Write about things you did wrong, things you might have done differently. What change can you make today?

Step 9: Our lives are never completely our own. Write about the ways in which some of the deepest truths of your life have an impact on other people. Reflect on how to respect their privacy as well as your own as you go through a program of recovery.

Step 10: Set aside some time to look calmly and objectively at your life in this present moment: the good and the bad, the contentment and the stress, the grace and the struggles. Write about what you observe. If it helps you to stay detached, write about yourself in the third person, using your name instead of "I."

Step 11: Spend some time in meditation, perhaps focusing only on a few words from Scripture or your favorite name for God. Write about any realizations you have about the experience.

Step 12: How can you gently encourage others to begin to explore the hidden depths of their own lives? Remember that this kind of journey can only be undertaken freely and willingly.

[1] Adapted from Richard Rohr, [\*Breathing Under Water Companion Journal\*](#) (Franciscan Media: 2015).