

A lit candle sits on a dark, reflective surface, possibly a table. The candle is lit, with a bright flame. The background is dark with many out-of-focus, warm-toned lights, creating a bokeh effect. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

***REMOVING DEFECTS OF
CHARACTER***
A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

CARDWELL C. NUCKOLS PhD
CNUCKOLS@ELITECORP1.COM

REMOVING DEFECTS OF CHARACTER

- **PAGE 62 OF THE BIG BOOK**
 - **“Whatever our protestation, are not most of us concerned with ourselves, our resentments, or our self-pity.”**
 - **“SELFISHNESS-self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles. Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking and self-pity...”**

REMOVING DEFECTS OF CHARACTER

- PAGE 62 OF THE BIG BOOK
 - “So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making. They arise out of ourselves, and the alcoholic is an extreme example of *self-will run riot*, though he usually doesn’t think so. Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us.”

REMOVING DEFECTS OF CHARACTER

*OUR DESTINATION IS
NEVER A PLACE BUT
RATHER A NEW WAY OF
LOOKING AT THINGS*

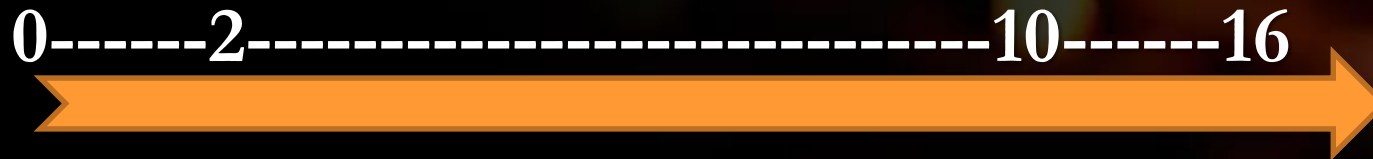
REMOVING DEFECTS OF CHARACTER

- The spiritual discovery...
 - *THE SENSE OF BEING FREED/RELEASED*
 - *A GENUINE GRATITUDE*
 - *A REAL HUMILITY LEADING TO TOLERANCE*
 - *A PERVASIVE FORGIVENESS*
 - *DEEP DISCOVERY AND SENSE OF “HOME”*

Knowledge may expand but wisdom deepens

EGO DEVELOPMENT

- ALTERED WORLDVIEW INITIALLY DEVELOPED BETWEEN TWO AND TEN YEARS OF AGE



0-2: KINESTHETIC, NONLINEAR

2-10: WONDERFUL RECEIVER

10-16: SELF-REFLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

THE EGO

- *Striving for security and certainty*
 - Illusions
 - Struggle to gain and to achieve which can lead to GREED
 - Always becoming, desiring and wanting
 - Always afraid
 - This fear is often beneath ANGER

THE EGO

- *Comparing and contrasting*
 - When it believes it is better than others it is euphoric
 - PRIDEFUL and ARROGANT
 - When it believes it is worse than another it becomes depressed
 - This can lead to ENVY and JEALOUSY
- *Is temporal*
 - Psychological time

THE EGO

- *Personal gain*
 - PRIDE
 - Front man for the ego
 - Always JUDGING others
 - Has motives, opinions and positionality
 - To possess
 - LUST
 - Always wants more and better
 - GLUTTONY

THE EGO

- ***THE EGO DEMANDS ATTACHMENT***
 - **IN ORDER TO LOVE MUST BE FREE OF ATTACHMENT AND CHARACTER DEFECTS**
 - **ATTACHMENT TO ANOTHER (IMAGE WE HAVE OF THE OTHER) LEADS TO...**
 - **PRIDE OF POSSESSION WHICH LEADS TO...**
 - **SENSE OF SECURITY (ILLUSION) WHICH LEADS TO ...**
 - **FEAR OF LOSING THE OTHER WHICH LEADS TO...**
 - **INCREASED ANXIETY AND GREATER ATTACHMENT (BEING POSSESSED BY THE OTHER)**

THE EGO

- “I” EXISTS...
 - ONLY WHEN I AM THINKING, IN CONFLICT, SUFFERING, OCCUPIED, JUDGING, COMPARING WITH STRAIN AND CHOICE
 - WHEN OCCUPIED WITH AMBITION OR WITH GOD
 - “MORE” IS THE WAY OF THE MIND KNOWING IT EXISTS
 - SENSATIONS PLUS THOUGHT EQUALS DESIRE

THE EGO

- *IN THE STATE OF “I”...*
 - *ONE CANNOT MEDITATE*
 - *ONE CANNOT HAVE A QUIET MIND*
 - *ONE CANNOT FIND “TRUTH”, THE “ACTUAL”, GOD, THE HOLY SPIRIT OR THE “REAL”*

EGO-BASED CHARACTER DEFECTS

PRIDE__is excessive belief in one's own abilities, that interferes with the individual's recognition of Grace. It has been called the sin from which all others arise. Pride is also known as Vanity.

EGO-BASED CHARACTER DEFECTS

These considerations were taken from pages 48, 49, 66 & 67 of the Twelve and Twelve The definitions from Webster's Unabridged Dictionary.

- PRIDE: An over high opinion of oneself; exaggerated self-esteem; conceit, arrogance, vanity, self-satisfaction.
 - Have I been so proud that I've been scorned (disrespected) as a braggart (bragger)?
 - Have I acted prideful, consciously or unconsciously out of fear?
 - Have I used pride to justify my excesses in my sex conduct?
 - Do I like to feel and act superior to others?
 - SPIRITUAL PRIDE

EGO-BASED CHARACTER DEFECTS

- GREED: Excessive desire for acquiring or having; desire for more than one needs or deserves.
 - Have I been so greedy that I've been or could be labeled a thief?
 - Do I long for the possessions of others out of fear of not getting enough?
 - Do I let greed masquerade as ambition?
- LUST: To feel an intense desire, especially sexual desire; to long: after or for.
 - Have I been lustful enough to rape, if not physically what about in my mind?
 - Do I fear I will never have the sex relations I need?
 - Do I have sex excursions that have been dressed up in dreams or delusions of romance?

EGO-BASED CHARACTER DEFECTS

- **ANGER**: A strong feeling excited by a real or supposed injury; often accompanied by a desire to take vengeance, or to obtain satisfaction from the offending party; resentment; wrath.
 - Have I been angry enough to murder?
 - Do I get angry out of fear when my instinctive demands are threatened?
 - Have I enjoyed self-righteous anger in the fact that many people annoy me and that makes me superior to them?
 - Have I enjoyed gossiping as a polite form of murder by character assassination?
- **GLUTTONY**: One who eats too much. One with a great capacity for something; as, a glutton for work.
 - Have I been gluttonous enough to ruin my health?
 - Do I grab for everything I can, fearing I'll never have enough?
 - Do I bury myself in my work, hobbies or activities?

EGO-BASED CHARACTER DEFECTS

- ENVY & JEALOUSY: To resent another for excellence or superiority in any way, and to be desirous of acquiring it.
 - Do I agonized over the chronic (persistent or recurring) pain of envy?
 - Does seeing the ambitions of others materialize make me fear that mine haven't?
 - Do I suffer from never being satisfied with what I have?
 - Have I spent more time wishing for what others have than working towards them?
 - **SCHADENFREUDE-TAKING PLEASURE IN THE MISFORTUNE OF OTHERS**
- SLOTH: Disinclination to action or labor; sluggishness; habitual indolence; laziness, idleness; slowness; delay.
 - Have I been paralyzed by sloth?
 - Do I get alarmed with fear at the prospect of work?
 - Do I work hard with no better motive than to be secure and slothful later on?
 - Do I loaf and procrastinate?
 - Do I work grudgingly and under half steam?

EGO-BASED CHARACTER DEFECTS

- **THERE ARE MANY OTHERS MENTIONED INCLUDING...**
 - Judgmentalism
 - Self-centeredness
 - Resentful
 - Prejudice
 - Self-pity
 - Self-righteousness
 - Impatience
 - Perfectionism.....etc.



PERFECTIONISM

- Three Subtypes
 - *Self-oriented*
 - *Socially prescribed*
 - *Other-oriented*
- Perfectionism can be domain-specific so that some people are perfectionistic only in certain domains of life.

PERFECTIONISM

- *Self-oriented*
 - Self-critical
 - Set exceedingly high standards for themselves and try to meet them
 - The self-oriented perfectionists showed an interest in others. They preferred affiliative humor — jokes that boost positive social feelings — and shy away from mean-spirited wit. Importantly, they lacked callous or uncaring traits and also showed themselves to be less competitive in nature.

PERFECTIONISM

– *Socially prescribed*

- Self-critical
- Feel the high standards they wish to meet have been set by others; this type of perfectionist believes acceptance by others is conditional upon meeting such standards.
- May be self-destructive as their attempt at flawlessness is likely to mesh with neuroticism, maladaptive coping, and negativity
- Socially-prescribed perfectionists, by contrast, made self-depreciating jokes and ranked low on the scale of self-esteem and self-regard. Additionally, they tended to be unemotional and also a bit antisocial.

PERFECTIONISM

– *Other-oriented*

- Those who want others to meet impossibly high standards — tend to be narcissistic and antisocial with a mean-spirited sense of humor.
- They show unique positive relationships with the Dark Triad personality traits (narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy) and unique negative relationships with nurturance, intimacy, and social development goals
- Become critical when others fail to meet such expectations.

PERFECTIONISM

– *Other-oriented*

- Far more antisocial they enjoyed making jokes at the expense of others and generally displayed callousness. At the same time, they had high self-regard and a sense of superiority, and so found it difficult to fit into a wider social circle.
- A 'dark' form of perfectionism positively associated with narcissistic, antisocial, and uncaring personality characteristics

Stoeber J. How other-oriented perfectionism differs from self-oriented and socially prescribed perfectionism: Further findings. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment*. 2015.

EGO-BASED CHARACTER DEFECTS

- THE EGO FUNCTIONS IN THE PAST AND THE FUTURE AND IS FEAR BASED
- CHARACTER DEFECTS CAN BE SEEN AS SPIRITUAL DEFICITS
- CHARACTER DEFECTS RESPOND BEST TO SPIRITUAL METHODS SUCH AS...
 - THE STEPS OF AA
 - BEATITUDES
 - HINDUISM
 - BUDDHISM

EGO-BASED CHARACTER DEFECTS

- Story of the Prodigal Son
- Some things psychology and pharmacology cannot effectively treat
- *Narcissism is such a problem*
- All character defects come from the narcissistic self-image of the ego

EGO-BASED CHARACTER DEFECTS

- *WORLDVIEW*

- Grandiosity is a worldview that demands “I need to be better than you”
- When I perceive I am not better than you it leads to anger and/or depression which in turn can lead to judgmentalism, motives, resentments and opinions
- When I perceive I am better than you, it leads to elation, enhanced self-image and a lack of empathy

THE EGO-THE"VICTIM"

HEINZ KOHUT-EGO PSYCHOLOGY

*GRANDIOSE SELF (EGO) IS
FORMED BY INTERNALIZING
"ALL GOOD" AND
EXTERNALIZING "ALL BAD"
EXPERIENCES*

THE EGO-THE "VICTIM"

- *MY PAST...*
 - *SHOULD HAVE...*
 - *COULD HAVE...*
 - *OUGHT TO BE...*
- *MY FUTURE...*
 - *WOULD BE DIFFERENT*

THE EGO-THE “VICTIM”

- EMOTION, ESPECIALLY NEGATIVE EMOTION ARE “TOOLS” OF THE EGO

REJECTION

↓
EGO



ANGER, PREJUDICE, ETC.



SECONDARY GAIN



RESENTMENT



THE EGO-THE “VICTIM”

- **BLAME-** “world’s greatest excuse”
 - A negative unconscious program learned in childhood
 - *Payoff*
 - Self-pity
 - Get to be the martyr and the victim (innocent victim)
 - Get sympathy
 - Might be financially rewarding
 - *Cost*
 - Loss of freedom
 - Self-perception-weak, vulnerable and helpless

A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

GRATITUDE (LOVE)

A CHANGE IN WORLDVIEW

GRANDIOSITY (CHARACTER DEFECTS)



A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- SKILL SET
 - Ask, admit and take action
 - Listen-humility
- PROCESS
 - A spiritual program such as AA
 - Surrender
 - Acceptance
 - Forgiveness



A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- **VEHICLES**
 - Contemplation
 - Meditation
 - Silence and solitude
 - Prayer
 - Spiritual study
- **PROMISES**
 - A new worldview
 - Positive emotions



SKILL SET:

TWELVE STEPS OF AA:CYCLE ONE

- 1st Step- *We admitted we were powerless over alcohol-that our lives had become unmanageable. (ADMIT)*
- 2nd Step- *Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. (ASK)*
- 3rd Step- *Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him. (ACT)*
- 4th Step- *Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. (ACT)*

SKILL SET:

TWELVE STEPS OF AA:CYCLE ONE

- **5th Step- *Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. (ADMIT)***
- **6th Step- *Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.(ASK)***
- **7th Step- *Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. (ASK)***
- **8th Step- *Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.(ACT)***
- **9th Step- *Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.(ACT)***

SKILL SET:

TWELVE STEPS OF AA:CYCLE THREE

- **10th Step- Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. (ADMIT)**
- **11th Step- Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. (ASK)**
- ◆ **12th Step- Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all of our affairs. (ACT)**

SKILL SET: TWELVE STEPS OF AA

- **FIRST:** *Admit*, getting in touch with feelings and attitudes and learn how to acknowledge them
- **SECOND:** Learn how to *ask* for assistance when needed; how to trust more
- **THIRD:** Learn how to take prompt *action*

SKILL SET: TWELVE STEPS OF AA

- WHEN IN PAIN...
 - There are those who simply will not *admit* it
 - There are those who will admit something is wrong but will not *ask* for help
 - There are those that can admit and ask but refuse to *act* on corrective measures

SKILL SET:

TWELVE STEPS OF AA: PROFILE

Use the following scale to express the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the statement:

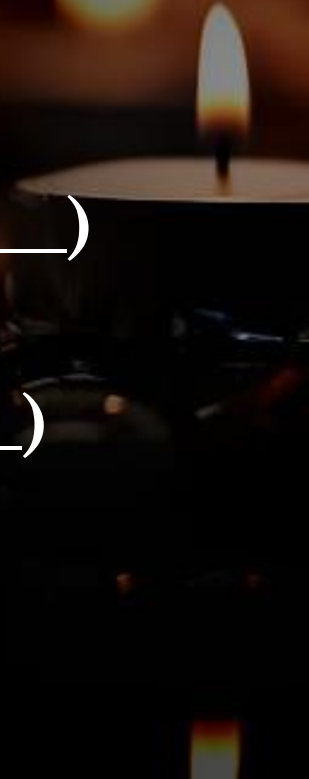
- 5=This statement applies to me all the time
- 4=This statement applies to me much of the time
- 3=This statement sometimes applies to me
- 4=This statement rarely applies to me
- 1=This statement never applies to me

Helgoe, Robert. *Hierarchy of Recovery*. Hazelden, 2002.

SKILL SET:

TWELVE STEPS OF AA: PROFILE

Put your response (one number from the scale) beside each statement...

1. I am a procrastinator; I put things off (___)
 2. I admit when I am wrong (___)
 3. I prefer to do things without help (___)
 4. When I know what needs to be done, I do it. (___)
 5. I am open to suggestions. (___)
 6. When I am not happy, I don't talk about it. (___)
 7. It is hard for me to ask for things. (___)
 8. Friends say I am a "doer." (___)
- 

SKILL SET:

TWELVE STEPS OF AA: PROFILE

Put your response (one number from the scale) beside each statement...

9. I do not like keeping secrets. (___)

10. I am more of a thinker than a doer. (___)

11. It takes a lot of evidence before I see something about myself I hadn't seen before. (___)

12. I am willing to do things differently than I usually do them. (___)

13. I am enjoying life. (___)

TWELVE STEPS OF AA: SCORING THE PROFILE

- A. Add the numbers recorded for items 2 and 9. (___)
- B. Add the numbers recorded for items 6 and 11. (___)
- C. Subtract B from A (may be a negative number). (___)
- D. Add the numbers recorded for items 5 and 12. (___)
- E. Add the numbers recorded for items 3 and 7. (___)
- F. Subtract E from D (may be a negative number). (___)
- G. Add the numbers recorded for items 4 and 8. (___)
- H. Add the numbers recorded for items 1 and 10. (___)
- I. Subtract H for G (may be a negative number). (___)

SKILL SET:

TWELVE STEPS OF AA: PROFILE

The *admit* index is C: (___)

The *ask* index is F: (___)

The *act* index is I: (___)

The largest number (C, F or I) is the persons strongest element. (_____)

The smallest number (C, F or I) is the persons weakest element. (_____)

An index lower than -3 indicates an area for great concern

PROCESS: A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- *Surrender is not about giving up or giving in to the wishes of another.* It is about accepting the moment at hand and realizing there is Perfection within the moment. It is the power to accept each moment for what it is rather than yearning for it to be something else. More often than not, our minds want us to believe that the past "should not" have been the way it was and that we do not deserve what the past gave to us or what the future may hold. Our mind, reflects over and over how it should have been or it takes us on a journey into the future of which we could never predict.

PROCESS: A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- *It is about living each moment as it comes and not worrying about what has taken place in the past or what may happen in the future.* It is about being certain that each moment of your life is being lived exactly as it is supposed to be to learn the lessons you were brought here to learn. If in the state of surrender than the truest thoughts are always, "Thy will be done."

THE EGO

- The most common self-critical thought people have toward themselves is that they are different from everyone else – not in a positive sense, but in some negative, alienating way. Why is low self-esteem so prevalent? Why are we so insecure?
- Every one of us is guilty of comparing, evaluating and judging ourselves with great scrutiny. We all have an internal dialogue that accompanies our feelings of insecurity known as the “critical inner voice.”

PROCESS: A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- *FORGIVENESS* is not the same as absolution.
- We surrender and forgive to get rid of resentments
- Forgiveness is the mental and/or spiritual process of ceasing to feel resentment, indignation or anger against another person for a perceived offense, difference or mistake, or ceasing to demand punishment or restitution

PROCESS: A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- *SELF-FORGIVENESS*

- When our actions have hurt others we need to forgive ourselves
- Not hold ourselves responsible for pain that others have caused us. *Especially when it was not our fault or we could not change the situation.*
- Studies show that the inability to self-forgive can be a factor in depression, anxiety and a weakened immune system

PROCESS: A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- One of the barriers people face in forgiving themselves appears to be that people feel morally obligated to hang on to those feelings. They feel they deserve to feel bad.
- Making amends gives us permission to let go
- Forgiving ourselves for hurting another is easier if we first make amends -- thus giving our inner selves a "moral OK"

PROCESS: A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- “And acceptance is the answer to all my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing or situation-some fact of my life-unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God’s world by mistake. Until I could accept my alcoholism, I could not stay sober; unless I accept life completely on life’s terms, I cannot be happy.” Big Book, pg 449, third edition

PROMISES: A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- Positive emotions may well be the neurobiological basis of spirituality, as well as, good mental health
- Positive emotions like *compassion, forgiveness, love, hope, joy, faith/trust, awe and gratitude* arise from our capacity for unselfish parental love and are hard wired
- Spirituality as an amalgam of its positive emotions that bind us to others and the experience of God as we understand Him


PROMISES: A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- Positive emotions have the potential to free the true self from the false self
- Negative emotions (fear, anger, etc.) are often crucial for survival but only in time present
- Ideas are neutral, valueless and colorless and elicit no sensation
- Emotions are felt physically
 - Either “good” or “bad”
 - Almost always elicit approach or avoidance

PROMISES: A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- Emotions are associated with activity in the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)
 - Negative Emotions=Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS)
 - Positive Emotions=Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS)
- None of the 8 positive emotions are “all about me” and they all invoke connection
 - They are often expressed with *gratitude*
- The negative emotions such as anger, lust, envy, jealousy, resentment, etc. are “all about me”
 - They are often expressed with *grandiosity*

TWELVE STEPS OF AA: PROMISES

1. Freedom (___)
 2. Happiness (___)
 3. Absence of regrets (___)
 4. Serenity or peacefulness (___)
 5. How much your experience benefits other people (___)
 6. Absence of self-pity (___)
 7. Interest in other people (___)
 8. Absence of selfishness (___)
- 

TWELVE STEPS OF AA: PROMISES

9. A more positive attitude about life (___)
10. Absence of fear of people (___)
11. Absence of fear of economic security
12. An ability to handle situations that used to be difficult (___)
13. Awareness of a Higher Power in your life (___)

***THE PROMISES ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF
RECOVERY***

A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- *GRATITUDE* FLOWS NATURALLY FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF RELEASE
- *GRATITUDE* IS NOT A FEELING
– AS LINUS IN CHARLEY BROWN SAID, “IF YOU WANT A SHIVERY, WARM FEELING GO PEE IN YOUR PANTS.”
- GRATITUDE IS A “GIFT”

PRIDE

- Is devoid of love and essentially destructive leading to *over-valuation, denial, playing martyr, opinions, arrogance, boastfulness, haughtiness, holier-than-thou attitude, being snobbish, prejudiced, judgmental, rigid, selfish and unforgiving*
- Intellectual pride is ignorance
- Spiritual pride is the main block to spiritual growth
- Religious pride by self-identification with a religion that is “the only true way”

HUMILITY

- Need to let go of pride by discovering its true nature
 - *What is pride's purpose?*
 - *What is its payoff?*
 - *For what does it compensate?*
- ***ANSWER:***
 - *The smaller we feel on the inside, the more we have to compensate for an inner sense of inadequacy by the substitution of pride*

HUMILITY

- *ANSWER: (continued)*
 - *The more we surrender negative emotions the less we rely on pride, in its place will come humility and we will experience it as peacefulness*
 - Humility has nothing to defend and cannot be offended by others as it has no image
 - Now one finds joy in accomplishment and not pride

HUMILITY

- *ANSWER: (continued)*
 - Pride carries with it a need for recognition and if not forthcoming...anger, resentment and even depression
 - If we achieve a goal for the love of the work we are invulnerable to the reactions of others
 - Pridefulness means we can be manipulated, get “suckered in” through appeal to our image
 - Pride loves negative emotions

HUMILITY

- HUMILITY
 - URIAH HEEP IN *DAVID COPPERFIELD*
 - SYNTONIC
 - EQUALS HONESTY
 - *Neither exaggerates or minimizes but accepts reality as it is*
- TO BE HUMBLE IS NOT TO MAKE COMPARISONS
 - *Leads to envy and jealousy*

HUMILITY

- *SO HUMILITY IS...*
 - Continuous movement toward the spiritual
 - *Remembering when we are up that we have been down before*
 - *Remembering when we are down that we have been up before and will be again*

A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- THE “GIFT” IS SPIRITUAL INSPIRATION FREELY AND SPONTANEOUSLY GIVEN
- *GRATITUDE* IS A WORLDVIEW THAT RECOGNIZES THE “GIFT”
- THE GRATEFUL SEE EVERYTHING OTHERS SEE
- THE DIFFERENCE IS THE APPRECIATION OF THE EXPERIENCE OF LOVE AND BEAUTY FOUND IN ALL LIVING THINGS

A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- NOT THE ARROGANCE OF GRANDIOSITY
 - “I’ve worked hard to get here and I deserve to be here and don’t you forget it.”
- IT IS THE VIEW OF A GRATEFUL SPIRIT
 - ‘how fortunate I am to be here and to do what I love...thinking and researching and sharing what I have learned. So many have helped me along the way.’

A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- WHAT DO YOU HAVE THAT YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED?
 - Gratitude says THANKS
 - Grandiosity (greed) DEMANDS MORE
- “TO THOSE THAT HAVE MORE WILL BE GIVEN.”
 - Self-fulfilling prophesy
 - *Only the grateful are in a position to receive*

A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- **OPPOSITE OF GRATITUDE IS GREED**
 - **GREED** says, “Everything is to be gotten.”
 - Implies control
 - Brings in the concept of time
 - Leads to misery
 - **GREED** is a yearning for more
 - Related to **DESIRE**
- **AS ERIC HOFFER SAID, “YOU CAN NEVER GET ENOUGH OF WHAT YOU DON’T REALLY WANT.”**

A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

- THE EGO WANTS TO HAVE EVERYTHING “PERFECT” AND TO BE HAPPY ALL OF THE TIME
 - Pain and pleasure
 - Happiness and Sorrow
- FOLLOW THE PAIN AND THE SORROW AS THEY CAN TEACH US SPIRITUAL LESSONS
 - EXAMPLE: SORROW TO ALONENESS TO BEING ALONE

THE STEPS OF AA

- 6TH STEP-WERE ENTIRELY READY TO HAVE GOD REMOVE ALL OF THESE DEFECTS OF CHARACTER
 - *Entirely ready*
 - *No resistance*
 - *Must totally surrender to our Higher Power*
 - *To surrender is to see things in the moment and just as our Higher Power planned for them to be*
 - *Our Higher Power must do this as we cannot*

WORKING THE STEPS: STEP SIX

- First acknowledge we have to work to see our many resistances, excuses and blockage but then fully acknowledge that our Higher Power alone can do the “removing”
- The rational mind misses the point as all true spirituality has paradoxical characteristics
 - Jesus is totally human and divine at the same time
 - God is both one and three at the same time
 - Mary is both a virgin and a mother at the same time

WORKING THE STEPS: STEP SIX

- We must fully own and admit that we have “defects of character” but then step back and do nothing about it until we are entirely ready to let our Higher Power do the job
- To fully understand is to stand under and let things have their way with us. It is the giving up of control to receive a free gift
- Ansel Adams- “Chance favors the prepared mind”
- To wait for and fully expect what Hungarian psychologist Michaly Csikszentmihaly calls “flow” (like living water)

WORKING THE STEPS: STEP SIX

- Waiting and preparing the mind for “chance”
- The softening of the heart
- Deepening of expectation and desire
- The readiness to really let go is the work of months and years of “fear and trembling”
- The supreme insight- *it is done unto me*

WORKING THE STEPS: STEP SIX

- We must *surrender* and take *responsibility*
 - *Build a bridge between the two and let it be built for you both at the same time*
- Our Higher Power is humble and never comes if not first invited but will find some way to get invited

THE STEPS OF AA

- *7th STEP- HUMBLY ASKED HIM TO REMOVE OUR SHORTCOMINGS*
 - *To be humble is to understand we can do nothing of our own*
 - *In order to be humble we must rid ourselves of the pride of the ego*
 - *We asked Him to perform a spiritual intervention on our behalf through prayer, contemplation and meditation*

WORKING THE STEPS: STEP SEVEN

- We ask not to change our Higher Power but to change ourselves
- We pray to form a relationship not to get things done
 - Not a way to control our Higher Power or to get what we want
- A sense of entitlement will kill any relationship undermining any notion of faith, hope or love between parties

WORKING THE STEPS: STEP SEVEN

- We can never guide our own transformation
- If we try it will be self-centered and well-controlled
- Like an alcoholic coming up with the rules for sobriety
- Need to let your Higher Power....
 - *Reveal your faults to you usually by failing repeatedly*
 - *Allowing your Higher Power to remove these faults from his side and in his way*

THE STEPS OF AA

CHARACTER DEFECT

- PRIDE
- GREED
- LUST
- ANGER
- GLUTTONY
- ENVY AND JEALOUSY
- JUDGMENTALISM
- SLOTH

SPIRITUAL VIRTUE

- HUMILITY
- ALTRUISM
- CONSENSUAL SHARING
- GENTLENESS
- DISCIPLINE
- GRATITUDE
- ACCEPTANCE
- INDUSTRIOUSNESS



THE STEPS OF AA

- EXERCISES

- PICK A SPIRITUAL VIRTUE

- Kindness
 - Acceptance
 - Love
 - Forgiveness
 - Humility

- CREATE “CHIPS” OR “CARDS”

- On one side-JUDGMENTAL while on the other side “JUDGE NOT”



THE STEPS OF AA

- For character defect removal must apply the spiritual principle of *willingness (being willing to act differently)*
- Fear is the chief roadblock to willingness
- Willingness requires faith and trust in one's Higher Power such that we believe the removal of character defects will not hurt us or others in our lives

THE STEPS OF AA

- “*ENTIRELY*” and “*ALL*” can lead to self-criticism and perfectionism
 - *Need to understand even though our willingness must be complete we are probably never going to be perfect in this lifetime*
 - When we stumble need to use the spiritual principle of self-acceptance
 - Accept our capability to act-out but still be committed to change

THE STEPS OF AA

- Sometimes our Higher Power might modify our defects so it serves a productive purpose
 - Example-Bill W. and his self-centered pride was transformed into a gift which resulted in the writing of a large body of recovery literature
- Also, nowhere in the text of this step does it say our Higher Power “will” remove defects
- Spiritual healing is a perceptual (worldview) change therefore a defect can be transformed into a gift
- Reality is not in need of healing-only our egoic perception

THE STEPS OF AA

- *How does prayer help?*
 - It doesn't help if we are asking our Higher Power to do the work for us
 - One might ask for the strength to change
 - Prayer is most effective when in silence and solitude we totally open ourselves up to our Higher Power
- *How does making amends help?*
 - *If action is an extension of the SELF it helps*
 - *If action is ego-based it will not help*

THE STEPS OF AA

- *True prayer is always about getting the “who” right*
- Who is doing the praying-you or the God in you
- It is an exercise in divine participation-you opting in and God always being there
- Most meditative and contemplative practices have to do with some concrete practices to recognize and relativize the obsessive nature of the mind
- The small mind cannot deal with **BIGNESS AND NEWNESS**

THE STEPS OF AA

- Dualistic thinking (ex. “all or nothing”) is at a complete loss with God, death, love, suffering and infinity
- *Meditation and contemplation are doorways to the nonlinear*
- *“Go to your inner room and shut the door”*
 - No rooms in a Jewish one-room house
 - The inner-self or unconscious secret place is where Truth is waiting
 - Prayer of Quiet

THE STEPS OF AA

- *Jesus goes into silence, into truth and is usually alone when he prays*
- It is the prayer of silence and self-surrender that best allows us to follow Step 11
- Only contemplative prayer and meditation touches and heals the unconscious

THE SELF

- THERE IS A “CHRIST” IN ALL OF US
- TO REALIZE REQUIRES GREAT DESIRE
- JESUS SHOWS US THE WAY
 - EXAMPLE-BEATITUDES
 - TO GET DIRECT KNOWLEDGE ONE MUST FIND OUT WHO ONE TRULY IS
 - ALL SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS TAKE US TO “SELF”

SELF

THE SELF

- *SIN IS...*

- A REFUSAL TO GROW

- A REFUSAL TO LOVE

- A REFUSAL TO BE COMMITTED

- A REFUSAL TO BE CONCERNED

- A REFUSAL TO TAKE RISKS

PARABLES-OF THE TALENTS (MATT 25:14-30)

and REFUSAL TO BEAR FRUIT (MATT 7:17-20)

THE SELF

- *SIN IS NOT....*
 - ACTS
 - DEEDS
 - LAWS
 - OBLIGATIONS
- THESE ARE SYMPTOMS OF A LACK OF SELF AWARENESS (TRUTH)
- *HOLY SPIRIT IS TRUTH*

SEEKING TRUTH

- *There is a compulsion within you to find the missing factor in your life, that which will restore you to your original state of harmony, joy and peace*
- **THE MISSING FACTOR IS THE PRACTICE OF THE PRESENCE OF THE SPIRIT**
- **The Word must be more than a quotation from a book**
- **IT MUST COME ALIVE WITHIN US**
- **It must be a vital living force (PRESENCE)**

SEEKING TRUTH

- **ESOTERIC AND EXOTERIC TEACHING**
 - A spiritual teaching penetrates beneath every human symbol to its spiritual meaning
 - Once this principle is understood and applied we are living a spiritual life
 - What is set forth for all to read is the exoteric teaching but each has an esoteric meaning
 - **EXAMPLE-91st Psalm** “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty”

SEEKING TRUTH

- 91st Psalm

- When we learn to abide in spiritual truth...in spiritual consciousness
- When we learn to “pray always”
- When we learn to live in the atmosphere of God as omnipotent
- Then the rest of the 91st becomes true
- **THE SECRET PLACE-THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF GOD AS A LIVING PRESENCE**
- **THIS TRUTH IS THE FORTRESS-OUR SHIELD AND BUCKLER**

EGOLESS

- *IS THERE A STATE NOT THE RESULT OF WORLDLY INFLUENCE?*
- *HAVE YOU EVER PURSUED YOUR DEEP INSTINCTUAL DEMAND TO BE FREE?*
- *FREEDOM IS AT THE BEGINNING AND NOT THE END*
- *FIRST BEAUTY IS A REQUIREMENT FOR THOSE WHO SEEK TRUTH*
 - *WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU WATCHED CLOUDS, A LEAF SHIMMERING IN THE SUNLIGHT OR LISTENED TO THE SONG OF A BIRD?*

EGOLESS

- FIRST BEAUTY IS A REQUIREMENT FOR THOSE WHO SEEK TRUTH
 - ONE NEEDS A DEEP FEELING FOR LIFE AND NOT BE TOTALLY CAUGHT UP IN INTELLECTUAL PURSUITS. INTELLECT IS NOT THE WAY.
 - DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE WORLD IS PERFECT? ALL CONFLICT IS A PRODUCT OF THE INTELLECT (THOUGHT, EGO)
 - INTELLECT IS LIMITED BUT SENSITIVITY HAS NO CONDITIONING-IT TAKES YOU OUT OF THE FIELD OF ANXIETY AND FEAR

EGOLESS

- FIRST BEAUTY IS A REQUIREMENT FOR THOSE WHO SEEK TRUTH
 - THE MIND THAT IS NOT SENSITIVE TO EVERYTHING AROUND IT IS INCAPABLE OF FINDING TRUTH
 - *IT IS BECAUSE WE HAVE LOST THE “FEELING”*
- SECOND THE QUALITY OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE IS REQUIRED
 - LOVE IS THE VERY ESSENCE OF BEAUTY-TO SEE THE BEAUTY IN EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE
 - WITHOUT LOVE YOU CAN GO TO RETREATS, MONASTERIES AND MEDITATE FOR YEARS AND NOT FIND TRUTH

EGOLESS

- THIRD THE QUALITIES OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE AND BEAUTY GIVE US A SENSITIVE (ORDERLY) MIND CAPABLE OF RECEIVING

*“RING THE BELLS THAT STILL CAN RING
FORGET YOUR PERFECT OFFERING
THERE IS A CRACK IN EVERYTHING
THAT’S HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN
THAT’S HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN.”*

“ANTHEM” LEONARD COHEN

EGOLESS

- THIRD THE QUALITIES OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE AND BEAUTY GIVE US A SENSITIVE (ORDERLY) MIND CAPABLE OF RECEIVING
 - A SENSITIVE MIND IS VULNERABLE, DEFENSELESS
 - THE MIND MUST BE VULNERABLE FOR THE TRUTH TO ENTER
 - EXAMPLE-THE TRUTH THAT YOU ARE ENVIOUS, JEALOUS, GREEDY...
 - WATCH OUT FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERS WHO TELL YOU THEY CAN SHOW YOU THE WAY TO LOVE AND FREEDOM

EGOLESS

- THIRD THE QUALITIES OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE AND BEAUTY GIVE US A SENSITIVE (ORDERLY) MIND CAPABLE OF RECEIVING
 - A LEADER WANTS TO LEAD PEOPLE TO SOMETHING THEY THINK IS RIGHT BUT UNCONDITIONAL LOVE CANNOT BE FOUND THERE- BECAUSE THEY ARE A LEADER
 - UNCONDITONAL LOVE NEVER EXERCISES AUTHORITY

EGOLESS

- FOURTH THE MIND MUST BE FREE AND DISCONTENT
 - THE TYPE OF DISCONTENT THAT SAYS THERE MUST BE MORE
 - A FEELING OF NOT FITTING INTO WHAT IS GOING ON AROUND YOU
 - THIS GIVES US ENERGY AND IS THE BEGINNING OF FREEDOM
 - NOT FREEDOM FROM SOMETHING
 - NOT FREEDOM WE HOPE TO GAIN BY CERTAIN SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

EGOLESS

- FOURTH THE MIND MUST BE FREE AND DISCONTENT
 - THERE IS A SENSE OF FREEDOM THAT IS NOT FROM ANYTHING, WHICH HAS NO CAUSE
 - IT IS A STATE OF BEING FREE
 - ISN'T THE FREEDOM WE STRIVE FOR ALWAYS BY OUR WILL?
 - SO WHAT IS WILL?
 - “I MUST BE” AND “I AM GOING TO BE”
 - “THE WILL TO NOT RESIST AND GO WITH THE CROWD”

EGOLESS

- FOURTH THE MIND MUST BE FREE AND DISCONTENT
 - THE WILL COMES FROM DESIRE
 - THE VERY DESIRE FOR FREEDOM IS THE DENIAL OF IT
 - DESIRE IS JUST ANOTHER DESIRABLE STATE I WANT INSTEAD OF “WHAT IS”
 - TRUE FREEDOM IS A QUALITY OF MIND, YOU CANNOT SEEK IT

EGOLESS

- *FIFTH A PERSON WHO IS CONVINCED OF SOMETHING IS INCAPABLE OF SEEING WHAT IS TRUE*
 - YOU CAN BE UNCONDITIONED AND CONVINCED OF SOMETHING ELSE
 - WHEN YOU RECEIVE “TRUTH” IT JUST IS
 - INTUITIVE
 - IT IS PERFECT MOMENT TO PERFECT MOMENT

EGOLESS

- *FIFTH A PERSON WHO IS CONVINCED OF SOMETHING IS INCAPABLE OF SEEING WHAT IS TRUE*
 - TO DIE TO THE YESTERDAYS IN FULL CONSCIOUSNESS, WITH VITALITY AND AWARENESS CREATES A MIND IN A STATE OF “NOT KNOWING”
 - ONLY A MIND CAPABLE OF BEING IN A STATE OF “NOT KNOWING” IS FREE
 - A MIND THAT LIVES IN THE KNOWN IS IN PRISON
 - THE MIND IS REALLY LEARNING ONLY WHEN IN A STATE OF “NOT KNOWING”

EGOLESS

- SIXTH HOW DO YOU BECOME FREE?
 - *FREEDOM IS PURE OBSERVATION (AWARENESS) WITHOUT FEAR OF PUNISHMENT OR REWARD; IT IS WITHOUT MOTIVE*
 - *FREEDOM IS NOT THE END OF EVOLUTION BUT THE BEGINNING*
 - *ONE CANNOT CULTIVATE FREEDOM BECAUSE THE MINUTE YOU USE YOUR BRAIN YOU ARE USING THOUGHT WHICH IS IN THE PAST AND HAS LITTLE ENERGY*
 - *ONE CANNOT CULTIVATE FREEDOM BY TORTURING ONE'S SELF, EXERCISES, DISCIPLINES AND DENIALS*

EGOLESS

- SIXTH *HOW DO YOU BECOME FREE?*
 - EXAMINE, SEARCH YOUR HEART AND MIND TO SEE THAT NOTHING COMES FROM THOUGHT (DESIRE, COMPULSIONS, OBSESSIONS, MOTIVES, OPINIONS, WILL AND ATTACHMENT- ALL EGOIC REACTIONS) CAN LEAD ME TO FREEDOM
 - UNDERSTANDING THIS SURRENDER EVERYTHING

EGOLESS

- SIXTH *HOW DO YOU BECOME FREE?*
 - TOTAL NEGATION IS THE ESSENCE OF THE POSITIVE
 - *“NETI”, “NETI”*
 - WHEN THERE IS NEGATION OF ALL PSYCHOLOGICAL THOUGHT (OPINIONS, MOTIVES, ATTACHMENTS I.E. ALL MEMORY OF THE PAST)
 - NOW THERE IS LOVE WHICH IS COMPASSION AND INTELLIGENCE

EGOLESS

- SIXTH HOW DO YOU BECOME FREE?
 - THE MIND NOW HAS A QUALITY WHICH IS NOT THAT OF A DISCIPLINED MIND SEARCHING OR AN UNDISCIPLINED MIND WANDERING
 - NOW ONE CAN UNDERSTAND FREEDOM WHICH IS NOT A RESULT OF OR FROM SOMETHING
 - THE UNIVERSE CANNOT COME TO A MIND THAT KNOWS MEASUREMENT
 - EXAMPLE-YOU REALIZE YOU CANNOT HAVE A QUIET MIND AS LONG AS THERE IS GREED, JEALOUSY. YOU INQUIRE AND INVESTIGATE AND PURGE YOUR MIND IN A CONSTANT STATE OF NEGATION

EGOLESS

- SIXTH *HOW DO YOU BECOME FREE?*
 - WHEN ONE HAS AN ORDERLY, SENSITIVE MIND IT CAN RECEIVE TRUTH, THE ACTUAL
 - THIS IS INSIGHT
 - INTUITIVE-INTELLIGENCE

HOW DO I DEAL WITH CHARACTER DEFECTS?

- *SUMMARY*

- *UNLESS TIME HAS STOPPED, THE MIND CANNOT PERCEIVE ANYTHING SACRED, ANYTHING NEW*
- *WE ARE TRAINED TO CHANGE “WHAT IS” TO “WHAT SHOULD BE”*
- *THE OBSERVER (EGO) DOES NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH “WHAT IS” AND, THEREFORE, TRIES TO CHANGE, CONTROL OR SUPPRESS IT*

HOW DO I DEAL WITH CHARACTER DEFECTS?

- *SUMMARY*

- *WHEN THERE IS NO MOVEMENT TO CHANGE “WHAT IS” THE “WHAT IS” CEASES*
- *THIS OCCURS IN COMPLETE SILENCE WITHIN THE ENERGY OF TRANSFORMATION*
- *IF SAY “I MUST BE FREE FROM ANGER, JEALOUSY. ETC” THIS IS AN ABSTRACTION AND NOT REAL*
- *IF SAY “I MUST OBSERVE THE FACT OF ANGER, JEALOUSY, ETC. AND LEARN THE WHOLE STRUCTURE OF ANGER, JEALOUSY, ETC.” OBSERVING DIRECTLY FOR HIMSELF, FINDS FREEDOM-NOT THROUGH CULTIVATION OF THE OPPOSITE WHICH IMPLIES TIME.*

HOW DO I DEAL WITH CHARACTER DEFECTS?

SUMMARY

- IS IT NOT THE WORD THAT IS STIMULATING THE FEELING?**
- CAN THE MIND REMAIN WITH THE FACT OF THE FEELING (SENSATION) AND NOT MOVE AWAY FROM IT**
- WHEN MIND REMAINS TOTALLY WITH THE FACT AND NOT THE WORD; WITH THE FACT OF THAT FEELING (SORROW, ENVY, JEALOUSY) OUT OF THIS COMES PASSION**
 - EXAMPLE: “I AM HURT.” CAN I FEEL THE HURT WITHOUT SAYING, “THAT’S NOT FAIR”, “JOHN IS A JERK” OR “I WILL GET EVEN.”**
- IT IS DIFFICULT BECAUSE THE EGO DOES NOT WANT TO LET THE FEELING ALONE**

HOW DO I DEAL WITH CHARACTER DEFECTS?

- *SUMMARY*

- *THE EGO COMES RUSHING IN WITH BRAIN “CHATTER”-JUDGMENTS, OPINIONS, MOTIVES*
- *CAN YOU JUST WATCH WITHOUT THE MOVEMENT OF THE MIND?*
- *REMAIN WITH SUFFERING WITHOUT THE WORDS, WITHOUT THE DESIRE TO GO BEYOND SO YOU ARE OBSERVING WITHOUT THE OBSERVER*
- *WHEN THE EGO COMES IN THERE IS ALWAYS CONFLICT*
- *CAN YOU LET THE THING YOU ARE WATCHING TELL ITS STORY RATHER THAN YOU TELL IT WHAT IT SHOULD BE*

THANK YOU

“THE TIME WILL COME WHEN THERE ARE NO MAJOR PROBLEMS IN YOUR OWN LIFE, AND MANY, MANY YEARS GO BY WITHOUT YOU EVER BEING AWARE OF A MAJOR PROBLEM OF YOUR OWN, BUT YOU WILL BE DRAWING TO YOU THOSE OF THE WORLD WHO ARE SEEKING THE SAME FREEDOM THAT YOU HAVE FOUND, AND YOU WILL BE CALLED UPON TO WORK WITH THEM-TO SERVE, TO HEAL, AND TO TEACH-BUT ONLY IN PROPORTION TO YOUR OWN DEMONSTRATION.”
J. GOLDSMITH.THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE, PG 85.