

MONTHLY FOCUS JANUARY STEP 1 DETAIL

Step 1

"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable."

WHO cares to admit complete defeat? Practically no one, of course. Every natural instinct cries out against the idea of personal powerlessness. It is truly awful to admit that, glass in hand, we have warped our minds into such an obsession for destructive drinking that only an act of Providence can remove it from us. No other kind of bankruptcy is like this one. Alcohol, now become the rapacious creditor, bleeds us of all self-sufficiency and all will to resist its demands. Once this stark fact is accepted, our bankruptcy as going human concerns is complete. But upon entering A.A. we soon take quite another view of this absolute humiliation. We perceive that only through utter defeat are we able to take our first steps toward liberation and strength. Our admissions of personal powerlessness finally turn out to be firm bedrock upon which happy and purposeful lives may be built. We know that little good can come to any alcoholic who joins A.A. unless he has first accepted his devastating weakness and all its consequences. Until he so humbles himself, his sobriety—if any—will be precarious. Of real happiness he will find none at all. Proved beyond doubt by an immense experience, this is one of the facts of A.A. life. The principle that we shall find no enduring strength until we first admit complete defeat is the main taproot from which our whole Society has sprung and flowered.

Alcoholics Anonymous World Service Inc. *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (pp. 21-22). AA World Services, Inc.

Additional Readings...

From "*As Bill Sees It*"

Self-Confidence and Will Power

When first challenged to admit defeat, most of us revolted. We had approached A.A. expecting to be taught self-confidence. Then we had been told that so far as alcohol was concerned, self-confidence was no good whatever; in fact, it was a total liability. There was no such thing as personal conquest of the alcoholic compulsion by the unaided will.

It is when we try to make our will conform with God's that we begin to use it rightly. To all of us, this was a most wonderful revelation. Our whole trouble had been the misuse of will power. We had tried to bombard our problems with it instead of attempting to bring it into agreement with God's intention for us. To make this increasingly possible is the purpose of A.A.'s Twelve Steps.

AA World Services Inc. *As Bill Sees It* p. 42 (Kindle Locations 645-653). A.A. World Services, Inc.

"From As Bill Sees It"

From the Taproot

The principle that we shall find no enduring strength until we first admit complete defeat is the main taproot from which our whole Society has sprung and flowered. << << << >> >> >> Every newcomer is told, and soon realizes for himself, that his humble admission of powerlessness over alcohol is his first step toward liberation from its paralyzing grip.

So it is that we first see humility as a necessity. But this is the barest beginning. To get completely away from our aversion to the idea of being humble, to gain a vision of humility as the avenue to true freedom of the human spirit, to be willing to work for humility as something to be desired for itself, takes most of us a long, long time. A whole lifetime geared to self-centeredness cannot be set in reverse all at once.

AA World Services Inc. *As Bill Sees It* (p. 305). **A.A. World Services, Inc.**

Daily Reflections (January 6)

THE VICTORY OF SURRENDER We perceive that only through utter defeat are we able to take our first steps toward liberation and strength. Our admissions of personal powerlessness finally turn out to be firm bedrock upon which happy and purposeful lives may be built.

TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS, p. 21

When alcohol influenced every facet of my life, when bottles became the symbol of all my self-indulgence and permissiveness, when I came to realize that, by myself, I could do nothing to overcome the power of alcohol, I realized I had no recourse except surrender. In surrender I found victory—victory over my selfish self-indulgence, victory over my stubborn resistance to life as it was given to me. When I stopped fighting anybody or anything, I started on the path to sobriety, serenity and peace.

AA World Services Inc. *Daily Reflections: A Book of Reflections* by **A.A. Members for A.A. Members** (p. 14). **A.A. World Services, Inc.**