

THE JOURNEY AT THE BEACH

J A N U A R Y 2 0 2 3

Tradition One • *“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.”*

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 129

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

“To thine own self be true”

NAME	YEARS	SOBRIETY DATE	CELEBRATING	WHERE	WHEN
Mike B	27	12/28/95	01/07/23	Positive Attitude • Stevenson UM Church Berlin	7:00 pm
Keith L	6		01/01/22	Happy Risers • Atlantic Club	9:00 am
Happy Hour	15	Group Anniversary		Happy Hour • Seaside Plumbing	6:00 pm
Joe P	23	01/12/00		Beginner's Big Book • Atlantic Club	6:30 pm
Elaine B	32	01/22/91		Happy Joyous and Free • River Church	10:00 am
John M	34	01/21/88		Proud To Have Served • Atlantic Club	6:00 pm

Please submit all anniversary information to Carla H at info@ocaa.org by the 28th of the preceding month of the anniversary. Include your name, sobriety date, celebration date, where and when. The newsletter is printed on the first Tuesday of every month, so if your sobriety date falls early in the month, we may put your announcement in the prior month's newsletter. Thanks!

Step One • *“We admitted we were powerless over alcohol that our lives had become unmanageable.”*

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 21

First Step Prayer • *Dear Lord, Help me to see and admit that I am powerless over my alcoholism. Help me to understand how my alcoholism has led to unmanageability in my life. Help me this day to understand the true meaning of powerlessness. Remove from me all denial of my alcoholism.*

Alcoholics Anonymous, chapter 3

http://friendsofbillw.net/twelve_step_prayers

THE JOURNEY AT THE BEACH

Understanding and Practicing Step One

Step One, when done right, is the beginning of a new way of life. This is the point at which you will no longer be able to enjoy your use of drugs or alcohol.

In short, the two main features of Step One are powerlessness and unmanageability. And while it may not be written directly in the step itself, there could be said to exist a third component—consequences. After all, were it not for the consequences of our addictions, we often would not have sought recovery in the first place. Our consequences are what brought us to the program. They are what opened our eyes to Step One in the first place, as we began to realize that our old way of life was unsustainable. Without our consequences, we may have wound up on the bottom of a ditch. We may even have wound up at the bottom of a grave. And for some of us, the consequence that brought us to Step One was an event that brought with it the fear of just such an occurrence.

We do not have to undergo a near-death experience in order to take Step One, but it's certainly one way of doing it. Some of us will reach this step because of various legal issues. We may also reach this point because we have lost relationships with friends, family members, lovers, or even employers. Basically, this step is the point at which we find that we are no longer willing to keep destroying our lives through the use of drugs and alcohol. This step is rock bottom.

Some say that there is actually a "Step Zero" that takes place right before we take Step One. Step Zero would be the step during which we realize that our life may need to change. There is then a Step 0.5, at which we realize that our lives will not change unless we do something to overcome our current condition. When we are ready to accept advice from others and do whatever is necessary in order to get sober, then we have finally reached Step One. This dependence on outside suggestions is highly important, as we must be at a place where we are willing to admit that our own way of doing things has not worked out for us. We must be ready to admit that, when we are running the show, things have a tendency to go wrong.

Step One is essentially our entry into recovery. How we get there is practically irrelevant, provided that we do in fact get there eventually. Without taking this step, we are essentially trying to fake our way into sobriety. This may work for a time, but it will not work forever. We cannot hope to enter recovery by simply attempting to deceive ourselves into believing that we are ready to give up our old way of life. This form of denial will have grave consequences, as it does not facilitate relapse prevention. We essentially set ourselves up to fail, and our relapse will often be worse than the using period that led up to our brief time in recovery.

The problem for many is that they do not fully understand the meaning of words such as powerlessness and unmanageability. We have likely experienced both of these while in our period of active addiction, but that does not mean we fully comprehend the extent of these damaging foes. If we are ever to truly take Step One, then we must know what it means to do so.

We reach Step One when we are at our most powerless.

On the surface, it may sound as if powerlessness and unmanageability have very similar meanings. But there are subtle differences between the two that must be understood. Looking back over our lives in the throes of addiction, we will find that there are many examples of powerlessness and unmanageability that have been present in our lives for quite some time. These have often led to some of our greatest consequences, so it is important to see the difference between the two. Again, these differences may seem quite subtle. In fact, some may see unmanageability as a direct result of powerlessness, rather than as an altogether separate quality of life.

When we admit that we are powerless, we are admitting that we cannot control the amount of alcohol we consume once we have started (or the amount we use, for those who abuse drugs without resorting to much alcohol use). We may be able to stave off the first drink or high for some time, but we will often find that we have virtually no limit once our drinking or drug abuse has begun. Even if we are not the types to use every day, we still have very little ability to control ourselves. One drop, one puff, one needle, and we suddenly find ourselves lacking inhibitions.

Powerlessness has a great many consequences. We may miss important functions because we would rather abuse drugs and alcohol than attend to family matters such as holidays and funerals. Many of us are rather content to disappoint those around us while in active addiction, but it is once the consequences of our actions become unacceptable that we will begin to take Step One and begin working toward sobriety. We may at first try to simply control our drinking, but powerlessness is a condition under which this feat is nigh impossible. The notion that we can both control and enjoy our drinking is merely a fantasy that keeps us at the bottom of the bottle. We must relieve ourselves of this false belief if we are ever to make any progress.

Unmanageability is what tends to arise from our powerless behaviors. We may perform poorly at work or at school. Our relationships will fall by the wayside. Our lives are unbearable, and yet we cannot seem to change them no matter how hard we try. This is often because we have not found the willingness to look outside of ourselves and rely on support groups or those in our emotional support system of friends and family. If we were to follow their suggestions, then we may wind up on the right path. But those for whom life has become unmanageable are often those who have attempted to exert their self-will onto numerous situations that were never truly under their control.

In fact, this attempt at control will often make unmanageability even worse. It would be nice if we could learn to use moderately, or to use without suffering any negative consequences. We often believe it to be unfair that non-addicts are able to do these things with such ease. It simply wasn't our lot in life to experience the benefits of this particular ability. Step One is the point at which we finally reach acceptance of

THE JOURNEY AT THE BEACH

this fact, and learn how to move forward without resenting our status as addicts and alcoholics.

Armed with an understanding of powerlessness and unmanageability, we are now ready to work Step One. We are ready to begin our 12 step recovery program into sobriety, and experience life anew. All that is left is to learn how to truly practice and embrace the principles of this step.

Admitting that you are an addict or alcoholic is one of the chief components of Step One.

There is a common saying among AA and NA members that Step One is the only step which you can take completely, as well as the one step which you must take completely. If we are not willing to give up control and admit that we are powerless over our addictions, then it will not be long before we attempt to use again.

Our practice of Step One begins the very first time we ever sit before others in a meeting and state our name before identifying ourselves as addicts and alcoholics. This is our true sobriety date, and it is one of the most important dates in our lives. But while it may take a great deal of willingness on the part of the addict or alcoholic to admit the nature of their disease, this alone will not ensure that they have taken Step One with 100% dedication and devotion.

In order to truly take Step One, you must do some hard thinking about what it will mean to return to active addiction. You must reflect on the consequences that powerlessness and unmanageability have wrought upon your life, and you must be absolutely certain that you are willing to give up this way of life for good. It is absolutely possible that you may slip at some point in the future, but do not think about that for now. Simply plan as much as you can, engage yourself in relapse prevention

techniques such as meetings and sponsor contacts, and ensure that you know what you are going to do if you are ever put in a situation where using becomes a possibility. If you have truly taken Step One, then the sheer possibility of relapsing will not make it desirable to do so.

More than anything, you will need to lean on people like your sober friends, your sponsor, your family, and other members of your support system. You cannot pretend to have given up powerlessness if you have still not given your life over to something greater.

This is where Step One starts to bleed in with the next couple of steps, so we'll stop before we lose sight of the discussion at hand. The point is merely that if you wish to take Step One, then you must be willing to put your faith in those around you. If you truly believe alcoholism and addiction to be the source of your powerlessness and unmanageability, you must not attempt to combat your disease all on your own. People say that the First Step is about admitting that you have a problem. This is true, but we'll give you a spoiler for next month's step discussion: the Second Step is all about admitting that you need help in resolving this problem. You have to start moving in that direction at Step One, or else your progression through the steps will be a long and difficult one that may not yield the positive results you are seeking.

Once you have fully committed yourself to Step One, you are ready to begin working your recovery in earnest. All you have to do is decide whether or not you're tired of living a powerless and unmanageable lifestyle. Put in those terms, the choice should be rather simple.

<https://www.amethystrecovery.org/understanding-and-practicing-step-one/>

We Invite You To Join Us!

MENS 12 & 12

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

AT 8:00 PM

ATLANTIC CLUB

small room

COME FOR THE FELLOWSHIP,

STAY FOR THE SOLUTION!

"ALL MEN OF FAITH HAVE COURAGE"

TWO WAY PRAYER

**A LOST TOOL FOR PRACTICING THE
11TH STEP**

WORKSHOP

Date: Sunday, February 19th, 2023

Time: 11:00 AM to 2:30 PM

Location: The Atlantic Club

11827 Ocean Gateway, OC MD 21842

Join us as we discuss:

- What is Two Way Prayer?
- How to Practice Two Way Prayer & Listen to God
- How to Start a Two Way Prayer Group
- Two Way Prayer Practice
- "Ask It Basket" and Questions at the End

Sponsored by: Ocean City Intergroup

Light Lunch Provided

THE JOURNEY AT THE BEACH

Intergroup

District 32 and the **Ocean City Area Fellowship Intergroup** meet every first Tuesday of the month at the Atlantic Club, 11827 Ocean Gateway, Ocean City, MD 21843 (Route 50 Westbound). All are welcome to attend.

Next meeting is Tuesday, February 7th at 6:00 pm

AA Meetings

Please visit the ocaa.org/meetings for the latest updates.

Inquires

24 Hour Hotline: 410-600-5219

Email: info@ocaa.org

... **SAVE THE DATE** ...
August 4-6, 2023

**51st Annual Area 29
Maryland State Convention**
Hosted by Maryland General Service, Inc. with Al-Anon Participation
Held at the Delta Hotel by Marriott—Hunt Valley • 245 Shawan Road, Hunt Valley, MD 21031

**Area 29
Maryland
State
Convention**

Without Unity, the Heart of AA
would cease to beat...
Sin Unidad, el Corazón de AA
dejaría de latir...

SPEAKERS • WORKSHOPS
HOSPITALITY SUITE • ALCATHONS
SAT BANQUET • DELEGATE REPORT
SOBRIETY COUNTDOWN
OLDTIMERS PANEL
AA HISTORY PRESENTATION
Ice Cream Social & Live Music
Friday & Saturday Evenings

Registration \$36 (cash or check)
\$38 (credit card or PayPal)
Convention Pin free for the first 600 Pre Registrations

Convention Hotel Room Rate: \$124/per night + tax
Hotel reservations must be made by Sunday, July 9, 2023
For hotel reservations, call 844-781-7404 (Code: MGS 2023 State Convention)
or online hotel registration click on—
Book your group rate for MGS 2023 State Convention
<https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?d=1666295073654&key=GRP&app=revlink>

or scan 

 Spanish & ASL Interpretation will be provided
with additional accommodations for the hard of hearing 

Footprints in the Winter Sand

Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel

10100 Coastal Highway

Ocean City, MD 21842

Friday, February 3rd - Sunday, February 5th, 2023

To print an application, visit:

<https://ocaa.org/footprints-in-the-winter-sand>



NEW Al-Anon Meeting

Sundays at 6 pm at the
Atlantic Club

• Concurrent with
Assateague AA Group •

Tell your friends!



I am responsible
When anyone, anywhere,
reaches out for help, I want
the hand of A.A. always to
be there.
And for that: I am
responsible