

THE JOURNEY AT THE BEACH

N O V E M B E R 2 0 2 3

Tradition Eleven • *"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films."*

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 180

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

"To thine own self be true"

| NAME | YEARS | SOBRIETY DATE | CELEBRATING | WHERE | WHEN |
|----------------|-------|---------------|-------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| Jeff C | 30 | 11/01/93 | 11/01/23 | Happy Risers • Atlantic Club | 7:30 am |
| Jeff K | 1 | 11/04/22 | 11/04/23 | Happy Risers • Atlantic Club | 9:00 am |
| James M | 1 | 11/09/22 | 11/09/23 | Happy Risers • Atlantic Club | 7:30 am |
| Fisherman John | 18 | 11/11/06 | 11/11/23 | Happy Risers • Atlantic Club | 9:00 am |
| Heather K | 19 | 12/03/04 | 12/05/23 | Come As You Are • River Church | 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 Eleven • *"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."*

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, page 96

Eleventh Step Nightly Review Prayer • *"God, help me to constructively review my day. Where was I resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid? Do I owe an apology? Have I kept something to myself which should be discussed with another person at once? Was I kind and loving toward all? What could I have done better? Was I thinking of myself most of the time? Or was I thinking of what I could do for others, of what I could pack into the stream of life? Please forgive me for my harms and wrongs today and let me know corrective measures I should be take."*

Alcoholics Anonymous, page 86:2

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"The process of enlightenment is usually slow. But in the end, our seeking always brings a finding. These great mysteries are, after all, enshrined in complete simplicity."

– Bill W

BREAKING DOWN STEP 11 OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Exploring spirituality in the [11th Step](#) of AA Alcoholics anonymous can be a wonderful and illuminating experience. We now have a solid frame of reference built by the previous Ten Steps of AA. Our recovery has helped us to stay sober one day at a time, and has allowed us to expand our capacity for new information about ourselves, and the world around us. This open mindedness is one of the greatest things about AA. In AA the concept of a "higher power" and "God as we understand him" really affords every single person, from every walk of life, an unlimited choice of spiritual beliefs and actions.

This part of the AA journey is going to be so different for everyone, and there's no right or wrong God, just as there's no right or wrong way to improve conscious contact. For some, being in recovery may mean healing resentments that we may have held against religious institutions. For some the religion of their childhood was little more than a community or sentimental connection but can now work really well for them as part of their personal spiritual path.

STEP 11 OF AA: THE SPIRITUAL PATH OUT OF ADDICTION

Exploring our spiritual path in Step 11 means picking up, leaning into and/or discarding various spiritual practices. AA itself does not have any official or specifically approved spiritual path. The AA program of recovery offers a set of spiritual principles, and uses a concept referred to as "God" or "higher power" or "power greater than ourselves" for members to use as a path out of active addiction.

Whether you are solid as a rock in your concept of a higher power and your spiritual path, or if your current state of mind holds no answers for you yet, it doesn't matter. Why? Because, at this point on our journey we can embark on a search for a better way to understand our higher power.

This process allows us room for adventure, humility and faith. We have the option to visit every place that has anything to do with spirituality that's available in our community. Some people I know love churches, cathedrals, synagogues and even graveyards as places where they feel divinely in tune. Others find that connection in nature, doing something they love, or through volunteering. It is also highly suggested that as you progress in recovery that you enhance your life with the abundant number of books and publications concerned with AA, spirituality and personal growth.

However, a central part of working Step 11 is not letting our own personal spiritual path take us away from the fellowship and practice of AA. Remember that we need the rooms of AA in order to deal with our addiction; our spiritual path, meditation and prayer will enhance the quality of our recovery but nothing can take the place of AA meetings, service and fellowship. With the 11th step we are adding to the many ingredients that make up the perfect sobriety pie. Nothing can take the place of the serenity we feel the moment we step into a meeting, or shake the hand of a newcomer.

PRAYER AND MEDITATION: A MINDFUL PLACE OF SERENITY

"In AA we have found that the actual good results of prayer are beyond question. They are matters of knowledge and experience. All those who have persisted have found strength not ordinarily their own. They have found wisdom beyond the usual capability. And they have increasingly found a peace of mind which can stand firm in the face of difficult circumstances." – Bill W

If you haven't heard it before, AA is a simple program for complex people. Most members of Alcoholics Anonymous will say this simple suggestion about Step 11: Prayer is "talking to God" and meditation is "listening to God's reply." This collective wisdom succinctly captures the meanings of prayer and meditation so well. It's also a great reminder that improving conscious contact means building a relationship with God. In order to build any kind of relationship there needs to be a dialogue- and not merely a monologue, in one direction.

SO HOW DO WE ENACT IN PRAYER AND MEDITATION EXACTLY?

When we say that prayer is talking to a higher power, it doesn't always have to be literally in the form of actual speech. Thinking a prayer, writing it or signing it may work for you. The key is to develop a form of prayer that feels right to you. If you have been attending AA meetings you have experienced saying a prayer. Even if the only prayers you say are the ones at AA meetings, you have been asking a higher power to keep you sober another day, for knowledge and the power to carry it out. These are habits that are helpful, healthy and may one day save your recovery.

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Believe it or not, you have already been meditating every time you've stood as a community, in a meeting and observed the moment of silence. Every time you were out of your own head and listening intently to the story of another person, you were meditating. I firmly believe that this is one of the reasons meetings are the medicine for alcoholics and addicts; that reprieve we feel from the obsessive mind and that refocusing which brings us to the present moment is a major part of meditation. It is a simple fact that prayer, meditation and conscious contact calms us down and grounds us; usually helping to alleviate the fears that seem to overwhelm and threaten our recovery. That's one of the reasons that we say "It works if you work it."

While actively working Step 11, any of us begin to notice more and more times when there is a presence of a higher power and the magnificent ways it works in our life.

The presence of a loving God can be experienced in nature, in the force of the ocean, through the unconditional love of our sponsor and other AA members and through the feeling of being anchored by our program during the storm of difficult times. That connection to a higher power and the intention of wanting to know what God's will is for us usually shows up while listening to and talking with other members of AA.

If the reason we've been praying and meditating is to seek the knowledge of our higher power's will for us and the power to carry that out, how do we identify what God's will is for our lives? I think it's much simpler to identify what is *not God's will*. In fact it's a great starting point to acknowledge that it is not God's will for us to relapse. Therefore acting in any way that might lead us to relapse is not God's will and informs us about a whole bunch of behaviors, choices and thoughts that we should NOT engage in. Using all of the knowledge that we have gained from our previous work on steps, about our patterns and ourselves we try our best to avoid destructive patterns.

In "It works: how and why" we read, "God's will for us is the ability to live with dignity, to love ourselves and others, to laugh, and to find great joy and beauty in our surroundings. Our most heartfelt longings and dreams for our lives are coming true."

MOVING ON FROM STEP 11: POWER TO CARRY IT OUT

"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life, that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Now is the time to put knowledge, faith and ideals into action; we can't pass on something that we don't have.

Some members of AA find that consistent prayer and meditation helps put a focus on a higher power instead of on them, which is a relief and a freedom.

No longer feeling such an urgency to control every little thing in our lives and surrendering that self will run riot, leads to more satisfaction and success.

This is a spiritual awakening. As part of our spiritual awakening we begin to manifest the three elements of recovery in AA, which involves the body, the mind and the spirit. These 3 elements together make up who and what we are and therefore true healing includes all of these aspects of the self. Just like a three-legged stool, our recovery cannot stay upright and secure unless all three legs are equally strong. So we work on and maintain all of them equally.

With this faith, courage and strength fully realized our days of active addiction no longer seem like a tragedy or a waste. We see that our experiences can serve a higher purpose; we are ready to carry the message to the addict who is still suffering.

Excerpts from <https://www.jasonwahler.com/12-steps-of-aa/step-eleven-of-aa-alcoholics-anonymous/>



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, December 5th 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

AREA 29 MULTI DISTRICT
ELECTION YEAR TRAINING EVENT
General Service
BRING THE HEAT AND A HEART FOR SERVICE

CHILI COOK-OFF

Sunday 11/5/2023
2:30-5:00 PM
Hot Prizes for the best chili!
REPRESENT YOUR GROUP,
DISTRICT, OR INTERGROUP

St Stephens Church, 901 Courtney
Road, Halethorpe, MD
GSR & DCM TRAINING
All are welcome!

\$5
SUGGESTED

ENTRY DEADLINE 11/2/23
CONTACT 410-949-6456 TO ENTER

CO-HOSTED BY ACCESSIBILITIES & DISTRICT18@MARYLANDAA.ORG

IN-PERSON SPANISH AND ASL INTERPRETATION PROVIDED

COMING UP

Footprints in the Winter Sand 2024

ASHORE Resort and Beach Club

(formerly The Clarion)

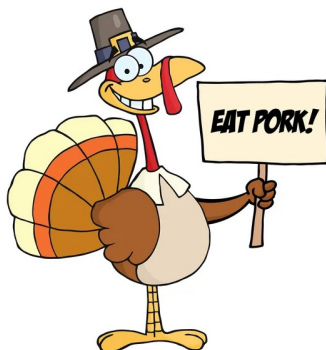
10100 Coastal Highway

Ocean City, MD 21842

Friday, February 2nd - Sunday, February 4th, 2024

To print an application, visit:

<https://ocaa.org/footprints-in-the-winter-sand-2024>



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

