

# Spiritual and Moral Standards

## A Search for Moral Character

By Rick R.

When I first started my AA journey, I attended different meetings at various locations in the area where I lived at the time. I was so new to the program that everything I heard was like gold. That was *exactly* what I needed at the time, and I settled into a group that made me feel welcome. As I heard some of the same stories over and over, I started to find fault with some of the other members, and I started to cut back on my meetings. I soon became discontented, so I started to scout around for other meetings that would satisfy my needs. I soon found a meeting where it seemed that they shared at a *deeper level*, addressing *moral issues* (Right from wrong) and that sustained me for a long time, but as I continued to grow, I again started to want more. I was soon drawn to literature-based meetings where the content of the *message* was of *spiritual development* and that turned out to be the ultimate goal for me.

Today realize that all those *different meetings were exactly what I needed* at that time in my journey through the recovery process. In the beginning I had to go through the *kindergarten phase*. That is where I learned to play with all the other kids, and when I got all that, I could from that, I had to go on to the *first grade*. This required more effort on my part. I was going to have to face my fears, guilt, shame, and remorse, etc. I often had the urge to go back to kindergarten where I could play with the less threatening aspects of my life. Fortunately, I came to realize that *I had to deal with these unpleasant memories of the past* if I were to have any *peace of mind* at all. It all had to do with my *misdirected instincts*.

As a child, as soon as I could *understand right from wrong*, I started making my own decisions about how I should conduct myself. I had not *evolved* emotionally enough to understand the consequences of my actions at that time, but I can look back on it now recognize the emotional damage caused by *lack of moral responsibility*. I knew what was right but was always too *needy and insecure* to do what I was taught. When I heard people talk about *moral or spiritual standards*, my rationalizing mind, dictated by my ego, would tell me that *"THEY WERE JUST LIKE SHEEP BEING LINED UP AND LEAD OFF TO CHURCH"*. Later, my conscience came into play, and it began to plague me. The only relief I could get was from the bottle and we all know how that works out.

In the program of Alcoholics Anonymous I have been taught to return to the *moral and spiritual values* that I learned as a child. Deep down inside, I have always wanted to do the right thing but, as I said, *I never had the strength of character to do what was right*. Today I have dedicated myself to strictly adhering to those standards and if that makes me a *SHEEP*, then so be it. If someone wants to call me a sheep, I only have one thing to say about that.

*"BAAAAAH"*