

True Humility and an Open Mind

Step Two is the Rallying Point

By Rick R.

When born, most of us come into the world untainted and perfectly innocent. From that time on, we are influenced by everything we experience in life, good and bad. If we are loved and nurtured, we may develop a feeling of trust and safety, but if, as it sometimes happens, we get our hand slapped when we pick up something from the coffee table, it may trigger an attitude of defiance and resistance. These two opposites are just examples of the many conflicts we encounter in a lifetime. We are conditioned to think and react in a certain way as the result of the experiences we are exposed to. Newcomers in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, (A.A.) and even some seasoned veterans, often find it hard to grasp a concept of "a power greater than ourselves." This is probably the biggest hurdle we in A.A. must face in our search for a happy and meaningful life. Once we get past all our resistance to the concept of a Higher Power, it becomes much easier to proceed with the rest of the program. What is meant by the word God and what God can do for us, can mean something different to just about everyone that is having difficulty with it, and if God alone was the answer, why do priests and ministers come to A.A. for treatment; why not just go to church? *Alcoholics Anonymous* is here for all alcoholics that want to get sober regardless of their approach to faith. Anyone that thinks that we are trying to convert someone into a religion or out of a religion is simply misguided. The Big book (*Alcoholics Anonymous*) and the 12&12 (*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*) have many comments explaining this, but unfortunately this old conditioning, bolstered by the EGO, seems to block some of us from breaking down the resistance on this subject, or some members may just fake it to appear to be going along with the program, but never getting the results. If we denied the possibility of a God of the different religious groups, they could not have A.A. available to them, and if we made it a requirement that we picked one of those beliefs, atheists would be left out and where would Buddhist stand? If a person believes that he does not have a higher power, I might remind him/her that alcohol was more powerful or else why would he need A.A.? With this in mind, I might suggest that he may only need to find a power greater than alcohol to begin with, then, as it says in Step 2 in the 12&12 "To acquire it, I had only to stop fighting and practice the rest of the A.A. program as enthusiastically as I could." As I look back on it now, I realize that that was exactly the way I found my way through this challenge. I find absolutely no conflict in any approach that one discovers on his own, only that he practices the rest of the program with enthusiasm. What it seems to imply is that if we trust the process and, just do the suggestions, you will find a suitable understanding of a power greater than yourself that you can do business with. I am still not sure what or who (if you like) I am asking for guidance from, but I am open minded about these things. I have to let everyone find their own brand of enlightenment, without pre-judging anyone else's approach on this matter. I believe that changing my perception was what put me firmly on the road to recovery. The only thing that I have to resist is my EGO, and the way I do that is by living by sound, unselfish principles, many of which are discussed in A.A. meetings, and many are assimilated through osmosis as I continue to put 2 and 2 together. It is not that complicated. If I do not get caught up in the debate and just follow the simplest suggestions, it all works out fine.