Joe McF's Outline

Steps One to Three, Ten to Twelve, and how he sponsors — the move, the passage, the question

"They did tell me, Joe, the only thing between you and a really good life is the first 103 pages of this book." — Joe McF, June 2020

> *"But the ex-problem drinker who has found this solution, who is properly armed with facts about himself, can generally win the entire confidence of another alcoholic in a few hours. Until such an understanding is reached, little or nothing can be accomplished."*
>
> — There Is a Solution, p. 18 ¶4

HOW TO FOLLOW THIS

Book open. Each numbered line is the move, then the passage — page and paragraph, checked against the book — then the question Joe asks, with a box to tick.

Serif italics are the book, verbatim. **Sans italics** are Joe. Small tags say where he said it: **W** = the June 2020 workshop with Tim M · **S** = Keep On Tookin' 2026, Session 7 · **R** = Red Room, May 2020.

The two ends. Joe took One to Three and Ten to Twelve in that workshop; Tim M took Four to Nine. The full outline, linked to every moment, is **joe-mcf-outline.md**; the sponsee's packet is **step-00-03**.

THE FIRST CALL

S 6:57 · 8:43 · 39:30

1. **Two questions.** *"Do you want to quit drinking, son?" — "Yes, sir." — "Can you quit drinking?" — "No." — "That's probably the first honest thing I've ever heard come out of your mouth."* Step One in miniature: obsession and craving, the two qualifiers of p. 44 ¶1.

2. **Three lies, two secrets.** A lie about who you are, who the world is, and who the people in it are. Two secrets: *you always knew you were smarter than you were ever able to demonstrate*, and *you always knew you wanted to love and be loved more than you were ever able to display or receive* — and for those two inabilities you found people, places and things to blame. *"Son, that's where Alcoholics Anonymous begins."*

3. **Is he sponsorable?**
   - ☐ *Will you take directions?* yes / no
   - ☐ *Will you take actions that go contrary to your emotions?* yes / no
   - ☐ *Will you live by the sponsorship principle, Tradition Two?* yes / no

   "I'll listen to your sincerity or insincere sincerity with my eyes."

BEFORE ANYTHING STARTS

S 9:39 · 14:51 · 4:42 · W 19:03

4. **The two agreements — the sponsor traps.** *"Remember it was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol"* p. 76 ¶3 · *"Reminding ourselves that we have decided to go to any lengths to find a spiritual experience"* p. 79 ¶1. Written in the front of his book and signed. When he balks later: *"Were you lying then, or are you lying now?"*

5. **The non-starter.** Everything he receives through these twelve surrenders he agrees to pass on. Yes or no; nothing starts until it is yes. *"... impressing upon them that they must do likewise with still others. This has become the basis of a rapidly growing fellowship"* p. xxv ¶5. Kate Holey, the day she threw him out of therapy: *"AA doesn't work for anybody unless and until you work for Alcoholics Anonymous."*
   - ☐ *Everything you receive, you agree to pass on.* yes / no

6. **The routine.** *"Repetition confirms and strengthens, and a working faith becomes habitual."* Talk to your sponsor every day; a meeting every day in the beginning; the book. Why: *"We are unable, at certain times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago. We are without defense against the first drink"* p. 24 ¶1 — *"between the commas: at certain times. I cannot think my way through it."*

Step One — The Problem

"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable." — p. 59

> *"These observations would be academic and pointless if our friend never took the first drink, thereby setting the terrible cycle in motion. Therefore, the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than in his body."*
>
> — There Is a Solution, p. 23 ¶1

THE FRAME — FIFTY-NINE PAGES

W 4:56 · 16:30

The recovery portion is the first 103 pages; the Doctor's Opinion through p. 43 plus Bill's Story is 59 of them — over half — on Step One. *"Every action in AA in the beginning and will always be built on my first step experience. That's the rocket fuel." "...we have been rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence of which we had not even dreamed"* p. 25 ¶1. Not education, not information — **identification**, *"the magic sauce."* He had been through treatment centers, state hospitals, 37 shock treatments, doctors and ministers; what changed everything was a man properly armed with the facts about himself.

> *Dr. Bob on Bill: "...he was the first living human with whom I had ever talked, who knew what he was talking about in regard to alcoholism from actual experience. In other words, he talked my language."* Doctor Bob's Nightmare, p. 180 — that is the whole job

BODY, MIND, SPIRIT

1. **Body — the allergy.** *"...the action of alcohol on these chronic alcoholics is a manifestation of an allergy; that the phenomenon of craving is limited to this class and never occurs in the average temperate drinker"* p. xxviii ¶1. *"Once I put it in my body, it takes me... I thought I was weak, but they said, no — you have a physical allergy."* Then the turn: *if that were all there was, detoxes would produce winners.* They don't. W 8:24

2. **Mind — the main problem.** He *"cannot after a time differentiate the true from the false"* p. xxviii ¶4 — you are making sense to somebody who can't yet. So, chapter four, p. 44, fourth line down: *"If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic"* p. 44 ¶1 — the first is the obsession, the second the craving. *"I've never not really wanted to quit entirely. I've always just changed my mind."* W 11:13

   - ☐ *When you honestly want to, can you quit entirely?* yes / no
   - ☐ *Once drinking, do you control the amount?* yes / no

3. **Spirit — your problem is sobriety.** *"My problem isn't alcohol. My problem is I love too much... That's not it. Alcohol is a symptom."* Spiritual malady, untreated alcoholism and unmanageability all sit in the center paragraph of p. 52 — read it to him in the second person, *Joe, when you're not drinking: "We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were a prey to misery and depression, we couldn't make a living, we had a feeling of uselessness, we were full of fear, we were unhappy, we couldn't seem to be of real help to other people"* p. 52 ¶2. W 12:27

   - ☐ *Is this you, sober?* yes / no

4. **The promises, backwards.** Sober, he is miserable while the room reads the promises; then he drinks and gets every one of them by the second glass — a new freedom, no regret, serenity, self-pity gone, interest in his fellows, no fear of economic insecurity, a whole new outlook pp. 83–84, the Ninth Step promises, borrowed. *"That's what alcohol does for you. And that's what makes you an alcoholic. It doesn't do that for people who aren't."* Then the progression takes even that: *"...such intervals—usually brief—were inevitably followed by still less control, which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization"* p. 30 ¶3. And stone-cold sober, *out of* the craving: *"There are many situations which arise out of the phenomenon of craving which cause men to make the supreme sacrifice rather than continue to fight"* p. xxx ¶1. That is who walks in the door. W 13:33 · 15:27

Step One — All or Nothing · Step Two — The Door

"We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics. This is the first step in recovery." — p. 30 ¶2

THE TWO ALTERNATIVES

W 16:30 – 23:19

5. **Not sobriety alone.** *"We feel that elimination of our drinking is but a beginning. A much more important demonstration of our principles lies before us in our respective homes, occupations and affairs"* p. 19 ¶1; *"We feel a man is unthinking when he says that sobriety is enough"* p. 82 ¶3. And he has no power for any of it — not even to admit in chapter three that he is a real alcoholic p. 21 ¶2 · the four kinds of drinker, p. 108 ¶5.

6. **All or nothing.** *"There is no good news at the end of the first step. It is a horrible place to be." "Until such an understanding is reached, little or nothing can be accomplished"* p. 18 ¶4. Not to the priest, the boss, the wife, the counselor — to himself. *"You can't almost take the first step. It's kind of like your plane exploded and you almost got a parachute."*

   - ☐ *Do you fully concede, to your innermost self, that you are an alcoholic?* — yes / no

7. **The bottom of p. 25 — six points, two alternatives.** Jim's six, in Joe's order: **(1)** *"to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best we could"* and **(2)** *"to accept spiritual help"* — the only two, once there is *"no middle-of-the-road solution"* and *"no return through human aid"* p. 25 ¶3; **(3)** *"we saw that it really worked in others"*; **(4)** the negative Step One — *"we had come to believe in the hopelessness and futility of life as we had been living it"* p. 25 ¶1; **(5)** *"were willing to make the effort"*; **(6)** *"because we honestly wanted to"* p. 25 ¶3.

   - ☐ *The bitter end, or spiritual help?* — which
   - ☐ *Did you see it work in others?* — yes / no
   - ☐ *Is life hopeless and futile the way you're living it?* — yes / no
   - ☐ *Will you make the effort? Do you honestly want to?* — yes / no

8. **The substitute.** *"Yes, there is a substitute and it is vastly more than that. It is a fellowship in Alcoholics Anonymous. There you will find release from care, boredom and worry. Your imagination will be fired. Life will mean something at last. The most satisfactory years of your existence lie ahead"* p. 152 ¶2 — the line that got Joe crying.

9. **Which one are you going to be?** *"Of alcoholics who came to A.A. and really tried, 50% got sober at once and remained that way; 25% sobered up after some relapses, and among the remainder, those who stayed on with A.A. showed improvement"* Foreword to Second Edition. *Of those who really tried —*

   - ☐ *Are you going to get a sponsor? Go to meetings? Read the Big Book? Take the steps?* — yes / no

STEP TWO — THE DOOR

pp. 44–57, fourteen pages · W 23:19 – 25:03

1. **What it is for.** *"Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a Power greater than ourselves"* p. 45 ¶1. All fourteen pages do one thing: throw away his concepts of God. Joe's objection: *"I believe God will do it for you good people, but I've been bad."*

2. **The cornerstone idea.** *"(c) That God could and would if He were sought"* p. 60 ¶6. *"...as soon as we were able to lay aside prejudice and express even a willingness to believe in a Power greater than ourselves, we commenced to get results"* p. 46 ¶1; *"When, therefore, we speak to you of God, we mean your own conception of God"* p. 47 ¶1. Jim's working definition: *the word God in AA is a representation of the transformation that takes place within each and every person who sincerely takes all twelve steps.*

3. **Open mind, by force.** *"In this respect alcohol was a great persuader. It finally beat us into a state of reasonableness"* p. 48. Hold on to the old ideas and the result is nil. *"You won't change — if you could change, you wouldn't be here — but you will be changed." "...we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction"* p. 46 ¶2: alcohol was the power directing him; now this.

4. **The question.** *"'Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?' As soon as a man can say that he does believe, or is willing to believe, we emphatically assure him that he is on his way"* p. 47 ¶2. *"As soon as you can say it, you're on your way — upon this cornerstone the structure gets built."*

   - ☐ *Do you now believe, or are you willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than yourself?* — believe / willing / no

Step Three — The Decision

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him." — p. 59

STEP THREE — THE DECISION

pp. 60–63 · W 26:50 – 29:18

1. **It is just a decision.** Jim: *"I want you to get on your knees, hold my hands, and let's do the third step prayer."* Joe does this with every man he sponsors.
2. **Read pp. 60–62 in first-person possessive.** *"The first requirement is that* Joe *be convinced that* his *life run on self-will can hardly be a success. On that basis* Joe *is almost always in collision with something or somebody, even though* his *motives are good"* from p. 60 ¶8 — all the way down through *"First of all, we had to quit playing God"* to the keystone: *"Most good ideas are simple, and this concept was the keystone of the new and triumphant arch through which we passed to freedom"* p. 62 ¶3. *"It's unbelievable the power that comes in the room when we do this."*
3. **Stop at the keystone.** *"Joe, are you convinced? Because we're not reading on."* He can't yet tell the true from the false, so make sure — talk, share your own similarities, read it again.
   - ☐ *Are you convinced?* yes / no
4. **Being convinced — the promises.** *"When we sincerely took such a position, all sorts of remarkable things followed. We had a new Employer… we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. We were reborn"* p. 63 ¶1. Jim: *the greatest two words in the book are the last two of that paragraph — that old SOB you used to be will be dead.*
5. **Take it.** On his knees, holding hands, out loud, together:

> *"God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!"*
>
> — How It Works, p. 63 ¶2

6. **Then the small print.** *"This was only a beginning"* p. 63 ¶3; *"…it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us"* p. 63 ¶4. *"How do I know I took the third step successfully?" — "Because you begin to take Step Four."*

WHEN "GOD" IS THE STICKING POINT

S 23:45 · 24:57 · W 25:03

- Joe: *"I didn't want this higher power nonsense."* Jim: *"You take the steps and the higher power will show up."* The decision comes first; the belief is built by the action that follows it.
- Clancy: *"A sponsor is someone you share your secret disbeliefs with."* Joe's was *I am unlovable* — the three lies again. Ask for his; it is usually what the God objection is standing in front of.
- Jim turned him to the front of the book and gave him one job in meetings: say yes. *Did that happen to me? Do I feel like that? Do I believe this program can work for me?* Identification does what argument cannot.

Steps Four to Nine — Tim's section of the same workshop. The resentment inventory as the discovery of buried scripts and demands, laid like landmines; the p. 67 questions; Step Five as the bird's-eye map, not a re-read; Six and Seven as five to ten minutes of pain instead of acting out; Eight in three columns; Nine — do it, do it quickly, complete it. Jim let Joe sponsor right after his own Fifth Step: *take them as far as you can, and at the eighth step pass them to somebody who has finished his amends.*

Step Ten — The World of the Spirit

"Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it." — p. 59

> *"It is easy to let up on the spiritual program of action and rest on our laurels. We are headed for trouble if we do, for alcohol is a subtle foe. We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition."*
>
> — Into Action, p. 85 ¶1

NOW THERE IS ACCESS TO THE POWER

W 1:10:47 – 1:18:03

1. **Where we are.** Amends made: *"We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past. We have entered the world of the Spirit"* p. 84 ¶1 — which the Fourth Step promised: *"When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically"* p. 64 ¶3.
2. **The warning first.** The long-form Twelfth Tradition: *"...that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all."* The principles are so powerful that, in spite of ourselves, life gets great — and an alcoholic gets fat, lazy and complacent. *"I suffer from alcohol-ism, not alcohol-wasm."* Two things have no cure: alcoholism and body odor. The good news is the daily reprieve. Keep the main thing the main thing.
3. **Power, present tense.** *"Lack of power, that was our dilemma"* p. 45 ¶1 — One through Nine cleared it. Power has no volition of its own; it is a doer. It turns toward alcoholism — *"Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles"* p. 62 ¶1 — or away from it, to unselfishness and other-centeredness, the root of every good thing. *"Remember that we deal with alcohol—cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us"* p. 58 ¶4 — *is*, not *was*.
4. **The first Step Ten in the book is Bill's.** *"I was to test my thinking by the new God-consciousness within. Common sense would thus become uncommon sense. I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me. Never was I to pray for myself, except as my requests bore on my usefulness to others. Then only might I expect to receive. But that would be in great measure"* p. 13 ¶4.
5. **Triadic circuitry — God, myself, others.** A disconnect anywhere and the current stops. Joe's daily questions: *Who am I listening to — who is narrating these thoughts? Are my thoughts, actions and deeds led by God, causing unity, or driven by fear and ego, causing conflict? How did I arrive at this decision — did I pray about it? Did I ask God what He would have me do, or not do? Did I share it with my sponsor? Did I read something in AA? What spiritual principle applies? "Quite as important was the discovery that spiritual principles would solve all my problems"* p. 42 ¶3.

THE STEP ITSELF — TWO PAGES

pp. 84–85 · W 1:18:03 – 1:22:34 · R 1:05:01

6. **Personal inventory.** *"...continue to take personal inventory and continue to set right any new mistakes as we go along"* p. 84 ¶1. Ours, not other people's: *"In AA we clean our own crappy diapers."* Short form: *Whoops.* Pencils have erasers; the only perfect thing in this world is a cubic zirconia. An exercise from a tape: every fifteen minutes, write down your dominant thought.
7. **RADS.** *"Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear. When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them. We discuss them with someone immediately and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help"* p. 84 ¶1. **R**esentful · **A**fraid · **D**ishonest · **S**elfish — the same four from Four and Five, the same four that open the night review. Each is *temporary agnosticism*; fear is *I don't think God's going to take care of it. "The chief activator of our defects has been self-centered fear—primarily fear that we would lose something we already possessed or would fail to get something we demanded"* 12&12, Step Seven, p. 76. Listen to your body — the bristle when you walk into a room. Listen to *who you are listening to*.
8. **The code.** *"Love and tolerance of others is our code"* p. 84 ¶1 — *of others*. *"Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God's will into all of our activities"* p. 85 ¶1.
9. **The guiding principle.** *"Giving, rather than getting, will become the guiding principle"* p. 128. You cannot out-give God; the getting is in the giving. Not going in — looking back: *"If you persist, remarkable things will happen. When we look back, we realize that the things which came to us when we put ourselves in God's hands were better than anything we could have planned"* p. 100 ¶1.

Step Eleven — Three Things at Three Times

"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." — p. 59

> *"Step Eleven suggests prayer and meditation. We shouldn't be shy on this matter of prayer. Better men than we are using it constantly. It works, if we have the proper attitude and work at it."*
>
> — Into Action, p. 85 ¶3

Joe's frame: three specific things at three specific times — when we retire at night, on awakening, and through the day. In the recording he calls this Step Ten; the passages are Step Eleven's, pp. 86–88, and Step Ten is the in-the-moment spot-check on the page before. He wraps them together himself: *"Steps 11 and 10 can be wrapped up in the RADS and PARS."* W 1:24:54

NIGHT — THE CONSTRUCTIVE REVIEW

p. 86 ¶1 · W 1:26:41

> *"When we retire at night, we constructively review our day. Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid? Do we owe an apology? Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another person at once? Were we kind and loving toward all? What could we have done better? Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time? Or were we thinking of what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life? But we must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others. After making our review we ask God's forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken."*

Joe's distinction: meditation is constructive imagination (his attribution to Bill). Fear is the **destructive** review — *"It set in motion trains of circumstances which brought us misfortune we felt we didn't deserve. But did not we, ourselves, set the ball rolling?"* p. 67 ¶3 — a prayer for what you don't want to happen. Review the day constructively, think of others, go back through your life thinking good of the people in it, and you set trains of circumstance in motion *to the good*, which is grace; a *slip* is slipping from it. The corrective measures are why you have a sponsor.

MORNING — REPORTING FOR DUTY

pp. 86–87

> *"On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives."* p. 86 ¶2

> *"We ask especially for freedom from self-will, and are careful to make no request for ourselves only."* p. 87 ¶1

Before he opens his eyes: *"God, this is Joe reporting for duty. What would you have me do?"* Then he listens; whoever comes onto the radar he prays for — and they call, or they are at the meeting. Walking in: three chairs, three taps, three prayers — for the ones suffering in the room, for the ones who left and haven't come back, for the ones who haven't arrived yet. *"I was prayed in here."* W 1:24:54

THROUGH THE DAY — PARS

pp. 87–88

> *"As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day 'Thy will be done.'"* p. 87 ¶3

- **P**ause when agitated or doubtful
- **A**sk what He would have me do
- **R**emind myself I am no longer running the show
- **S**ay *Thy will, not mine, be done*

Then: *"But this is not all. There is action and more action. 'Faith without works is dead.'"* p. 88 ¶3 R 1:05:01 · W 1:23:32

The proper attitude is p. 55: *"If our testimony helps sweep away prejudice, enables you to think honestly, encourages you to search diligently within yourself, then, if you wish, you can join us on the Broad Highway. With this attitude you cannot fail. The consciousness of your belief is sure to come to you."* (p. 55 ¶3) — *"I don't go to it; it comes to me."* · **Books:** *"There are many helpful books also… Be quick to see where religious people are right. Make use of what they offer."* (p. 87 ¶2) Joe's rule for the first year: the Big Book only, all the way through.

Step Twelve — Three Parts

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs." — p. 60

1 · HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

W 1:30:30 – 1:31:41 · S 18:54 · 49:27

Assume *"the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism"* Appendix II. Bill's real awakening was not the flash of light — that story is in *Pass It On*, not in Bill's Story here; what the Book has of his earlier flash is that *"soon the sense of His presence had been blotted out by worldly clamors, mostly those within myself"* p. 13. It came a few sentences later:

> *"While I lay in the hospital the thought came that there were thousands of hopeless alcoholics who might be glad to have what had been so freely given me. Perhaps I could help some of them. They in turn might work with others."* Bill's Story, p. 14 ¶5

Selfish and self-centered on steroids, turned toward others — the embryo of sponsorship. Joe's definition of a spiritual experience: *I, me and my* converted to *we, us and our.* Thirteen days sober, Christmas Eve 1934, feeling alcoholic-y at his brother-in-law's flat, Bill went back to Towns Hospital to work with a rummy: *"…I soon found that when all other measures failed, work with another alcoholic would save the day. Many times I have gone to my old hospital in despair"* p. 15 ¶1. *"For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead"* pp. 14–15.

2 · CARRY THIS MESSAGE

S 24:57 – 38:39

> *Dr. Bob's four reasons: "1. Sense of duty. 2. It is a pleasure. 3. Because in so doing I am paying my debt to the man who took time to pass it on to me. 4. Because every time I do it I take out a little more insurance for myself against a possible slip."* Doctor Bob's Nightmare, p. 181

"Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics" p. 89 ¶1; *"Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery. A kindly act once in a while isn't enough"* p. 97 ¶1. The Christmas his kids weren't brought to him and he wanted to drink, Jim sent him to the detox commitment nobody else could cover. *"I don't have a message to carry." — "Go there and lie your ass off."* The seven-foot man from that detox now coaches at a rec center with a master's degree. *"There is nothing too good for a sober alcoholic. God will not do one good thing for anybody that He won't do for everybody — a light switch doesn't ask if you've been to jail or Yale." "…in God's hands, the dark past is the greatest possession you have—the key to life and happiness for others. With it you can avert death and misery for them"* p. 124 ¶2. *"There's only one acceptable answer to an AA request, and that is yes."*

3 · PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS

S 41:30 – 49:27

"A much more important demonstration of our principles lies before us in our respective homes, occupations and affairs" p. 19 ¶1 — 19 and 82. The circle and triangle, multi-dimensional: unity, service, recovery · body, mind, spirit · steps, traditions, concepts · home, occupation, affairs. *"I cannot treat a threefold illness with one of the solutions."* The covenant: *"We had a new Employer. Being all powerful, He provided what we needed, if we kept close to Him and performed His work well"* p. 63 ¶1 — Joe's job from feet-on-the-floor to head-on-the-pillow: make my employer look good; make my sponsees, my home group, my wife and my grandkids look good. *"We are in the world to play the role He assigns"* p. 68 ¶2 — *"I wanted to be William Wallace. The role God assigned me is Barney Fife: a supporting actor."* A new service position: be the GSR of your home group at work, at home, on the freeway, as if the whole group were watching on a big screen — principles before personalities; *"Our common welfare should come first"* Tradition One.

"See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us. Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny."

— A Vision for You, p. 164 ¶2–3 · Joe: *"I'm on the USS Joe McFadden of alcoholism. I need to abandon that."*

How Joe Sponsors

sponsorship is a principle, not an emotion — Keep On Tookin' 2026, Session 7

> *"A.A.'s Twelve Steps are a group of principles, spiritual in their nature, which, if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole."*
>
> — Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, Foreword

A PRINCIPLE, NOT AN EMOTION — S 5:33

- Emotions are the whitecaps on the sea. Sponsorship is **Tradition Two**: *"a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience."* A sponsor and a sponsee are a group conscience of two.
- What changes is p. 27: *"Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them."* p. 27 ¶4
- **Cadence.** Jim: three times a week, one-on-one, for eight years — the steps, then the traditions, then the amends, then p. 87's other books. Permission to sponsor came right after Joe's Fifth Step. His card read *Joe McFadden, spearhead of God's ever-advancing creation* — it is in the book p. 49 ¶1; Jim asked what was wrong with him.

THE INTAKE FOR A MAN WITH TIME — S 40:36

- Sponsor-jumpers take their last jump into a drink; the reason he left his last sponsor is the reason he will leave you — so listen.
- ☐ *In what areas of your life are you experiencing lack, limitation, conflict, despair or separation — which is nothing more than separation from God?*

  ☐ *Do you believe God can take you further? If you do, why hasn't He?*

  It comes down to belief systems. Then he writes an inventory in those areas: home, occupation, affairs.
- **Pain** *"is the distance between what is and what you want it to be."* The steps reconcile the two. Uncontented sobriety leads back to a drink or worse — *"his many troubles, now made more acute because he cannot use alcohol to kill the pain"* 12&12, Step Three, p. 39.

DECIPHER THE TRUE FROM THE FALSE — S 45:06

- *"What color is this wall?" — "Yellow." — "I'm telling you right now it is purple, and I want you to act like it's purple."* Not walls — emotions. The railroad tracks converge to a point; call the Railroad Commission about the wreck and they will think you're crazy.
- Listen to what he tells you, listen to what he doesn't want to tell you, then decipher what really is. A sponsor is someone you are willing to surrender your better judgment to.
- **Take the forks away.** He reads *"Lack of power, that was our dilemma"* p. 45 ¶1, sees an outlet, and reaches for a fork — his own idea about what his wife really meant. Fear *"set in motion trains of circumstances"* p. 67 ¶3; we take contrary action instead.

WHY EVERYONE MUST SPONSOR — S 26:14

- The redwoods grow in clusters because their roots are shallow; they root to each other or topple under the splendor of their own magnificence.
- *"If you're not sponsoring, you're a selfish, self-centered person — and by the implication of the Twelfth Step, you haven't taken the steps."* The meeting-makers who never give it away: when they die, so does their sobriety.
- **A sponsor sees who you really are.** *"I love you and you don't got to change a doggone thing about you, because I know who you are."* The most important word in all our literature is **only**: *"praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out"* p. 59.

Kate Holey, 2010 International: *"I've been praying for you for 23 years."* · The miracle: *"I can look myself in the black part of my eyes and not want to puke."* · *"Spirituality is in hindsight. I get a hangnail, I think it's cancer."*

Alcoholics Anonymous (the Big Book), pp. xxv–xxx, 13–30, 42–68, 76–100, 108, 124, 128, 152, 164, 180–181; Appendix II · Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions: Foreword, pp. 39 and 76, Traditions One and Two, the long form of Twelve · Joe McF in the Tim M corpus: Online Workshop, June 2020; Keep On Tookin' 2026, Session 7; Red Room, May 2020 — machine-transcribed, so hear the moment before quoting him; the book was checked against the text.