

## Maintenance Questions

Reading from Alcoholics Anonymous, Big Book, (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition), and 12 & 12

*(November 2017, VSB Website Resources Sub-Committee: The readings are from the AA 'Big Book', 3<sup>rd</sup> edition and/or the 'Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions'. "D & R" mean discuss and reflect. Quotes from AA material have been updated to reflect alcohol, as written. OA only has permission to change the wording to "compulsive overeater" in OA Steps and OA Traditions. In one's private reading and writing, one can substitute the words "food" and "compulsive overeater" for "alcohol" and "alcoholism.")*

The purpose of this set of questions is to eliminate the need to purchase additional books in order to work the OA/HOW maintenance program. As a secondary purpose the Maintenance Questions Committee has set about to organize the questions to coincide with the manner in which the Big Book was intended to be used as noted in the preface to the Big Book on page xi.

In the preface we are told the Big Book is a basic text. In school we were taught a textbook is intended to be used in a progressive fashion, beginning in the front. We have started with Dr. Silkworth's identification of the problem and worked through the book, blending in the steps and the traditions as appropriate.

1. Read the "Doctors Opinion" in the Big Book. Dr. Silkworth identifies the problem. Why did I compulsively overeat? What has replaced my addiction through the program?
2. Read pages 1-10 in the Big Book. In what ways do you relate to the feelings and experiences that Bill had?
3. Read pages 11-16 in the Big Book. Bill talks about a foundation upon which his life could be built. Upon what foundation does your abstinence rest?
4. Read pages 17-21 in the Big Book. What are the common bonds, which join us in the fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous?
5. Read pages 22-27 in the Big Book. Have I fully accepted that turning my life and will over to my higher power and working the 12 steps in all areas of my life is the solution to my maintenance?
6. Read pages 28-31 in the Big Book. Have I fully conceded to my inner most self that if I do not remain spiritually fit I will return to compulsive overeating?

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7. Read Chapter 3, "More About Alcoholism" in the Big Book. Write on the concept that "half measures avail us nothing.", BB p. 59 How have I utilized this idea in my daily living?
8. Read pages 44-47 in the Big Book. What is your concept of your higher power?
9. Read pages 48-57 in the Big Book. Discuss and reflect on the idea this program doesn't work on logic alone. Intellectualizing leads to rationalization. The program works on open-mindedness, willingness and faith.
10. Read pages 58-60 in the Big Book. Do I feel I am utilizing these steps in all areas of my life? Where are they necessary to my serenity?
11. Read Step 1 in the 12 & 12. Discuss and reflect on the following idea: What purpose can I find in God's plan that commands me first to admit that I am helpless before He gives me help?
12. Read pages 25-30 in the 12 & 12. Write on the following quote: "Humility and intellect could be compatible, provided we place humility first.", 12 & 12 p. 30.
  - a. Why is it important to my program that I work on my humility daily?
  - b. Discuss why the concept that the absence of humility is arrogance.
13. Read pages 31-34 in the 12 & 12. What will I do when the symptoms of my insanity surface periodically? What are these symptoms?
14. Read pages 60-63 in the Big Book. Write on the concepts of:
  - a. I must be right.
  - b. I must be important.
  - c. I must succeed as they manifested themselves in your life before OA. How do you deal with them now?

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15. Read pages 38-39 in the 12 & 12. Write on the concept that 'my life today, compared with the mess it was yesterday, shows progress.' Discuss this progress as the beginning of your acceptance of life as it comes.
16. Read pages 40-42 in the 12 & 12. Discuss and reflect on the idea that only God can remove the reoccurring moments of irrationality. Also, write about how, on a daily basis, we can turn these problems over to Him.
17. Read pages 64-65 in the Big Book. Write on the concept of selective surrender as it manifests itself in your life.
18. Read pages 66-71 in the Big Book. Discuss and reflect upon 'Why do people who have neglected to do a thorough Fourth Step have problems with their abstinence?'
19. Read pages 72-75 in the Big Book. Discuss the idea that of compulsive overeating is not of me.
20. Read pages 53-55 in the 12 & 12. Write on the concept that thinness to me has both a negative and positive emotional response. What are my negatives and what my positives?
21. Read pages 56-59 in the 12 & 12. How is the taking of this Step 5 necessary and vital in the quest for true humility?
22. Read pages 59-63 in the 12 & 12. (Step 5) Discuss and reflect on the idea that 'Confession without change is a game.'
23. Read page 76 in the Big Book. Write all the defects you are willing to give to God. Then write on those defects that you feel you may still be hanging onto.
24. Read pages 77-84 in the Big Book. Discuss the 12 Promises as they have manifested themselves in your life today. (12 Promises: page 83-84.)
25. Read pages 64-66 in the 12 & 12. How can I judge as to what are my charter defects?

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26. Read pages 67-70 in the 12 & 12. When put into practice, how can Step 6 help us rub off the sharp, hurtful corners of our personality?
27. Read pages 71-76 in the 12 & 12. Discuss the idea that commitment to work on our character defects is God acting through us.
28. Read pages 77-78 in the 12 & 12. Discuss and reflect upon how unmanageability reactivates fear in your life. Also discuss why fear is disloyalty to God.
29. Read pages 79-80 in the 12 & 12. Discuss your relationships with those around you. How honestly have you practiced the OA Program in all your affairs?
30. Read pages 81-84 in the 12 & 12. Discuss and reflect on the idea that the only way to get rid of the past is to get a future out of it.
31. If you have not made a list of amends, begin at this point. Write the names of at least 5 people who will be recipients of your amends. Write what you intend to say briefly to each.
32. Read pages 85-89 in the 12 & 12. Change is the key to the OA Program. What changes have you already made in your life -- what further changes do you wish to have God make in your life?
33. Read pages 84-85 in the Big Book. Discuss the idea that we have been given a daily reprieve contingent upon the maintenance of our spiritual condition.
34. Read pages 90-91 in the 12 & 12. Is there still something you need to clean up? If so, write on it and find someone to turn it over to. Then, discuss and reflect on why it is most important to learn to forgive yourself.
35. Read page 92-93 in the 12 & 12. Write on the concept 'Nothing is more dangerous than an idea when it is the ONLY idea I have.'

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36. Read pages 93-94 in the 12 & 12. Write a 10th inventory based on the following ideas:
  - a. Honest regret for harms done.
  - b. Genuine gratitude for blessings received.Then discuss and reflect upon a willingness to try for better things tomorrow.
37. Read pages 75-77 in the 12 & 12. Discuss and reflect on the following idea: "We sought for humility as something we really wanted, rather than as something we *must* have.", 12 & 12 p. 75.
38. From your reading of Step 10 in the 12 & 12. Discuss and reflect on the idea that self-sufficiency is an act of EGO (EASING GOD OUT). Then take an inventory of today that points to all the things in your life that your Higher Power has done.
39. Read pages 85-88 in the Big Book. Discuss and reflect on how you have stopped trying to arrange life, to suit yourself and have accepted the idea: "Thy will, not mine, be done.", BB p 85.
40. Read pages 98-100 in the 12 & 12. Discuss how you work the Serenity Prayer in your life today.
41. Read pages 101-103 in the 12 & 12. Discuss how through prayer defeat, rightly accepted, need not be a disaster.
42. Read pages 104-108 in the 12 & 12. Discuss and reflect on the following idea: Happiness comes as the result of living the way believe God wants you to live.
43. From your reading of Step 11 in the 12 & 12. Discuss and reflect on the idea that adversity is a God-given opportunity to develop new courage. Find instances of this new courage in your life.
44. From your reading of Step 11 in the 12 & 12. Discuss how God has created order out of your private chaos. Also, discuss and reflect how praying for others has become a force for good in your new life.

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45. From your reading of Step 11 in the 12 & 12. Discuss the following idea: 'How can I make my "Free Will" the "Will of God"?'
46. From your reading of Step 11 in the 12 & 12. Discuss the things you can do to learn to like yourself better and gain more self-respect.
47. Read pages 89-98 in the Big Book. (Step 12) Discuss the following ideas:
  - a. Our problems are of our own making.
  - b. Food is only a symbol of our deeper problem.
  - c. We have stopped fighting anybody or anything, because we have to.
48. Read pages 99-103 in the Big Book. Discuss the following ideas:
  - a. As a long-term maintainer you are OA's program of attraction.
  - b. When all else fails, listen for the 'still, quiet voice' from within.
49. Read pages 109-117 in the 12 & 12. (Beginning of Step 12). Discuss and reflect on the following idea: Our basic troubles are the same as everyone else's. How has the OA program taught us to take these troubles in stride?
50. Read pages 117-125 in the 12 & 12. Discuss the following ideas:
  - a. Right action is the key to good living.
  - b. The joy of living is the key to the OA program.
51. Read pages 104-112 in the Big Book. Discuss how you will learn to share your love, joy and happiness. Discuss how you may show others the way to use spiritual tools for growth.
52. Read pages 113-121 in the Big Book. Discuss how bringing the OA program into your life is a gift of opportunity. What are the opportunities open to you?
53. Read pages 122-130 in the Big Book. Write on the concept of 'In what ways must I give myself in order to give to others?'

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54. Read pages 125-132 in the 12 & 12. Write on the idea that we must be open to receive love in order to love. How can this openness dispel our fear of loving?
55. Read pages 131-135 in the Big Book. Discuss the concept "We are sure God wants us to be happy, joyous, and free. We cannot subscribe to the belief that this life is a vial of tears, though it once was that for many of us.", BB p. 133.
56. Read pages 136-142 in the Big Book. Discuss what sacrifices am I willing to bear to maintain a contented maintenance?
57. Read pages 143-150 in the Big Book. Write on the concept that unless you remember where you have been, you are destined to go back there again.
58. Read pages 151-164 in the Big Book. Discuss the idea "that the answers will come, if your own house is in order.", BB p. 164.
59. Read pages 159-164 in the Big Book. Write on the concept that God's vision for you includes the concept that you cannot transmit something you haven't got. What must you do to maintain what you have?
60. Read page 569 in the Big Book. Why is my continuous abstinence from compulsive overeating and negative thinking a personal testimony "...that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.", BB p. 84.
61. Read pages 133-135 in the 12 & 12. Write on the concept that any type of living, any philosophy of life, which adds to inner conflict is incorrect for the individual who harbors it.
62. Read pages 136-142 in the 12 & 12. Discuss the idea that people do not put us on a pedestal, we put ourselves on a pedestal. What can we do to remind us that we are compulsive overeaters and are just one bite away?
63. Read pages 143-149 in the 12 & 12. Discuss the idea that all true communication comes from mutual need.

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64. Read pages 150-153 in the 12 & 12. Discuss and reflect upon the idea that 'all is fundamentally well.'
65. Read pages 154-158 in the 12 & 12. Write on the concept that to be vital, faith must be accompanied by self-sacrifice, and constructive, unselfish action. How has your present recovery given testimony to this concept?
66. Read pages 159-163 in the 12 & 12. Discuss the following concepts:
  - a. Your joy in living the OA spiritual program.
  - b. God's spiritual mandate: 'Do this and live!'
67. Read pages 164-169 in the 12 & 12. Discuss and reflect on the following concepts:
  - a. First thing first.
  - b. There are better things ahead.
  - c. Live and let live.
  - d. God is my refuge.
  - e. But for the grace of God.
  - f. Easy does it.
68. Read pages 170-175 in the 12 & 12. Discuss the following ways to improve your understanding of God:
  - a. Positive action.
  - b. Positive thoughts.
  - c. Becoming a positive being.
69. Read pages 176-179 in the 12 & 12. Discuss the idea that the choice is mine.
70. Read pages 180-183 in the 12 & 12. Write on the concept of what I must do to add to the quality of life via the program. How can I relate this growth to my life outside the program?
71. Read pages 184-187 in the 12 & 12. Write on the concept, 'It is not so much what I say as what I do. It is not so much what I do as what I am.'



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72. Read pages 188-192 in the 12 & 12. Write about at least one person to whom you owe an amend. In your writing plan how, you would make the amend if you were to carry through with this Step.
73. Read pages 171-181 in the Big Book. Discuss and reflect on the following ideas:
  - a. Help is there if the compulsive overeater means business.
  - b. What are my other and greater rewards?
74. Read pages 182-192 in the Big Book. Can you forgive yourself and be receptive to God's will? Prepare yourself for this task by enumerating the prayers God has already answered for you.
75. Read pages 192-209 in the Big Book. Write on the concept of vulnerability as it applies to H.A.L.T. (Hungry, Angry, Lonely, and Tired).
76. Read pages 210-221 in the Big Book. Discuss and reflect why now more than ever you must stop making unreasonable demands upon yourself, God and others.
77. Read pages 222-229 in the Big Book. Write on what is a failure? What is a mistake? How do these concepts work in your life?
78. Read pages 230-237 in the Big Book. Discuss the idea that happiness comes from not trying to solve problems that have no solution.
79. Read pages 238-250 in the Big Book. Discuss how our stories are not of success but of suffering transmuted under grace into spiritual progress.
80. Read pages 439-452 in the Big Book. Discuss living in the solution, rather than the problem and acceptance is the key to serenity.
81. Read pages 531-543 in the Big Book. Discuss and reflect upon 'Our mental abilities far exceed our emotional maturity due to our disease.'