

ACTIVE ADDICTIONS
ANONYMOUS



THE WILD LIFE

ACTIVE ADDICTIONS ANONYMOUS – THE WILD LIFE
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Art on front cover – *The Wild Life Day*

Art on back cover – *The Wild Life Night*

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WHAT IS ACTIVE ADDICTIONS ANONYMOUS?

Active Addictions Anonymous is a non-profit Fellowship of men and women, for whom addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with our self, others, life and the World at large had become a problem.

The Program in AcAdAn is a Program to complete abstinence from using addiction to chronic dissatisfaction on our self, others, life and the World at large.

Instead we choose to use the AcAdAn Program to achieve contentment with our self, others, life and the World at large.

There are no strings attached to AcAdAn.

AcAdAn is not a religious Program.

AcAdAn is a spiritual Program and as such AcAdAn neither support nor oppose any conviction, belief system or religion; we are neither affiliated with any religious or political group and are not affiliated with any other organization either.

Anybody can join us irrespective of his/her form of active addiction, age, race, sexual identity or sexual choice, political conviction, faith, religion or lack of religion.

The only requirement for membership of Active Addictions Anonymous is a desire to stop using addiction to chronic dissatisfaction on one self, others, life and the World at large.

We have no membership fees, no pledges to sign, and no promises to make to anyone.

We are not interested in who or what has brought about our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, what we have done in the past, how much or how little we own, but only in what we want to do about our problem and how we can help each other recover from our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction.

The newcomer is the most important person in AcAdAn, because we can only keep what we have received in AcAdAn by passing it on.

We have learned from our experiences in the AcAdAn Fellowship that those of us, who keep coming to our meetings regularly become able to achieve contentment with our self, others, life and the World at Large.

WHY ARE WE HERE?

We are a Fellowship of men and woman, who want to achieve accept of our self, others, life and the World at large and thus contentment under all circumstances, no matter what they are, and to fulfil this desire we work with the Program in AcAdAn.

We meet regularly to help each other recover from our compulsive use of our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction by sharing our recovery experiences with each other and thereby draw strength and hope from each other.

Before we came to the Fellowship in Active Addictions Anonymous, we could not accept our self, others, life and the World at large.

We could not live and enjoy life like other people could.

We always felt that something was lacking in our life, and we believed that if only we used our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction to force our self and others to work more, change enough, think, feel and act differently or became better in some areas, we would become able to accept our self and others as we and they are; and if only others treated us better, were more understanding, loving and caring, we would be able to accept our self, them, life and the World at large as everything is.

Most of us realized that in spite of our continuous efforts to change, and in spite of all the understanding, love and care we received from others, we still felt dissatisfied with our self and others.

Our inability to accept our self and life as it is actually created manifested our own problems.

We felt addicted to chronic dissatisfaction with our self, others, life and the World at large.

After having tried everything we could by our self to overcome our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction without success, we eventually sought help from each other in Active Addictions Anonymous.

The Program of Active Addictions Anonymous made it possible for us to learn to accept our four basic attributes as human beings – our limitation, ignorance, powerlessness and mortality/changeability – and thereby we liberated our self from the sufferings that sprang from our lack of capacity to accept our self and others as human beings, and life as it is for a human being.

At long last, we had found a Fellowship with others, who suffered from the same as us, and together we moved from our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with our self, others, life and the World at large to contentment.

WHO HAS THE DISEASE OF ACTIVE ADDICTION?

Those of us, who cannot liberate our self from our obsession with thoughts about alcohol, drugs, nicotine, food, dissatisfaction, our body, compulsive spending, gambling, sex, coupleships, friendships, codependency, destructive thoughts and emotions, character defects, work, money, power, prestige, fame, material or spiritual ambitions, or any other thought obsession that drives us to act compulsively, suffer from the disease of active addiction.

Because of our active addiction, we are trapped in a constant flow of thoughts overwhelming us to act contrary to our heart's desire, and this we call obsession.

When we become overpowered by such obsessive thoughts, we end up impulsively acting on them, and we are thus compulsive.

Our active addiction can be of a mild, moderate or severe nature, just like it is the case with any other physical or psychological illness.

Today, many are found, who suffer from a severe case of active addiction, and many more, who have a mild or moderate form of this disease.

Our experience has shown us that, whether our disease is mild, moderate or severe, over time, it generally settles within us as an addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with our self, with everything and everyone everywhere, at all levels of existence, and thereby with life itself.

However, when we came to AcAdAn, we discovered we could learn to live a content life with the help of the Program of Active Addictions Anonymous whether our active addiction was mild, moderate or severe.

THE PROGRAM OF ACTIVE ADDICTIONS ANONYMOUS

STEP 1: We admitted we were powerless over our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction – that our life had become unmanageable.

STEP 2: We came to believe that a Power greater than us could lead us to contentment.

STEP 3: We made a decision to turn our will and our life over to the care of our Higher Power, *as we understood that Power*.

STEP 4: We made a searching and fearless inventory of our self.

STEP 5: We admitted the exact nature of our character to our self, our Higher Power, another human being and our AcAdAn Fellowship.

STEP 6: We became entirely ready to allow our Higher Power to liberate us from our defects of character.

STEP 7: We humbly asked our Higher Power to liberate us from our defects of character.

STEP 8: We made a list of all those we had harmed, beginning with our self, and became willing to make amends to all.

STEP 9: We made amends to our self and others except when doing so would cause more harm to us or others.

STEP 10: We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

STEP 11: Through prayer and meditation, we sought to improve our conscious contact with our Higher Power, *as we understood that Power*, praying only for knowledge of our Higher Power's will for us and the power to carry that out.

STEP 12: Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these Steps, we practiced these principles in all our affairs and carried the message of AcAdAn to others suffering from addiction to chronic dissatisfaction.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Begin working on your own program by working Step One from the Program of Active Addictions Anonymous with the help of a Sponsor, who is usually an experienced AcAdAn member, who can guide you through the Steps, and if such a person is not available, it has been suggested, that you can work the Steps in a different manner by forming a recovery partnership with another AcAdAn member and work through the Steps with him/her, and if you want to you can even make use of both opportunities.

When we fully concede to our innermost self that we are powerless over our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, we have taken a giant step towards acceptance of our self, others, life and the World at large, and thereby we have taken a giant step towards contentment.

Many of us had some reservations at this point, because we had difficulties imagining how it could become possible for us to stop being addicted to chronic dissatisfaction, but we suggest you give yourself a break and are as thorough as possible from the beginning.

Go to Step Two, and then work the rest of the Steps, one by one.

Gradually, your understanding of the Program will develop as you begin to experience results and when you experience those advantages that spring from your work with the AcAdAn Program.

Come to our meetings.

Here, you will find answers to some of the things that may be disturbing you now.

We suggest that you come early to the meetings and stay for a while after the meetings to develop a sense of Fellowship with the other members.

If you are unable to come to a meeting for various reasons, then maintain a regular contact with the Fellowship by being in contact with the members of AcAdAn.

You can do this person to person, via telephone, emails and chat rooms on the Internet.

Abstain from using your addiction to chronic dissatisfaction one day at a time.

Most of us can abstain for one hour from what seems impossible over a longer period of time.

If you become consumed by a thought that springs from your addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, then put yourself on a 'five minutes at a time' basis to abstain from taking your addiction to chronic dissatisfaction into use.

Minutes will grow into hours and hours into days, and thus you can break the habit and gain some peace of mind.

The real miracle happens when you realize that your compulsive need to use your addiction to chronic dissatisfaction has been repealed.

You have stopped being dissatisfied and have begun living a life of contentment.

EASY DOES IT!

The Program of Active Addictions Anonymous might seem to us like a humongous task, and it helps us if we remember that we cannot do it all at once, and that nobody expects us to.

It is also important to remind our self that we did not develop our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction in one day and we do not recover in one day either, so remember – EASY DOES IT!

An attitude of indifference and intolerance towards earthly and spiritual principles can destroy our recovery process.

Four of these principles that are essential for our recovery are honesty, open-mindedness, willingness and humility.

When we acknowledge this, and take these four principles to heart, we are well on our way.

We feel that our approach to our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction is highly therapeutic, for the healing power of two or more people helping each other to liberate themselves from their addiction to chronic dissatisfaction is without parallel.

We believe that the sooner we take care of our problems in our daily lives whether they are material, physical, space-time wise, emotional, thought wise, social or spiritual that much sooner we begin to live in contentment.

The only way to avoid returning to our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction is by not taking our dissatisfaction into use.

If you are like us, you know that one situation, which is received with dissatisfaction createsmanifests a multitude of consequences.

We place strong emphasis on this, for we know that when we use dissatisfaction in any form, we activate our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction all over again.

Before we came to AcAdAn, many of us perceived our demands, that we should be understood, admired, respected, perfect, healthy, beautiful, famous, rich and so on, and that others in our life should be completely loving, caring, giving, understanding, tolerant, and so on, as fair and reasonable, but we cannot afford to be confused about this issue.

These demands createmanifest dissatisfaction.

We are people who suffer from an addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with self, and thereby with others and our life plus the World at large, and we must abstain from using dissatisfaction in all its forms and disguises to be able to recover.

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF ACADAN

Just like each of us as individual members of Active Addictions Anonymous find our place in the Fellowship and in the World at large, the group finds its place in the Fellowship and in the World at large with the help of the Twelve Traditions of Active Addictions Anonymous.

TRADITION 1: Our common welfare should come first; our personal recovery depends on the oneness of our group and the survival of the group depends on each individual member's sense of belonging to the group.

TRADITION 2: For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority, a loving Higher Power as that Power comes to expression through our Group Conscience. Our leaders are trusted servants; they do not govern.

TRADITION 3: The only requirement for membership of Active Addictions Anonymous is a desire to liberate oneself from using addiction to chronic dissatisfaction.

TRADITION 4: Each AcAdAn group is autonomous except in matters affecting AcAdAn as a whole; similarly, each member of the group has the right to be autonomous except in matters affecting the group or AcAdAn as a whole.

TRADITION 5: Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry the message of recovery to others, who suffer from addiction to chronic dissatisfaction.

TRADITION 6: An AcAdAn group ought never endorse, finance or lend the AcAdAn name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, power and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

TRADITION 7: Every AcAdAn group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

TRADITION 8: Active Addictions Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

TRADITION 9: AcAdAn as such ought never be organized, but we may createmanifest service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

TRADITION 10: Active Addictions Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AcAdAn name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

TRADITION 11: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of Internet, press, radio, TV and films.

TRADITION 12: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

JUST FOR TODAY

Many of us in AcAdAn use this affirmation in our recovery:

JUST FOR TODAY, my thoughts will be on my recovery, living and enjoying life without using my addiction to chronic dissatisfaction against myself, others, life and the World at large.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will have faith in someone in AcAdAn, who believes in me and wants to help me in my recovery.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will use my AcAdAn program. I will try to follow it to the best of my ability.

JUST FOR TODAY, through AcAdAn, I will try to get a better perspective on myself and my life.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will be undaunted, my thoughts will be on my new family, people who are not using addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with self, others, life and the World at large, and who have found a new way to live.

So long as I follow this way, I have nothing to fear!

STEP ONE

WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER OUR ADDICTION TO CHRONIC DISSATISFACTION – THAT OUR LIFE HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE.

When we began studying our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction in Step One, we discovered that it sprang from the fact that we had difficulties accepting our four basic attributes as human beings - our limitation, ignorance, powerlessness and mortality.

Therefore we began to investigate how each of these four attributes expressed themselves on all levels of our existence - in our material life, in our physical life, in our space and time, in our emotional life, in our thought life, in our social life and in our spiritual life.

Then, we admitted how our lack of acceptance of our humanness and that of others gave rise to our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with self, others, life and the World at large and how that made our life unmanageable.

After having investigated how our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with our humanness expressed itself, we also took a look at how we had tried to escape our humanness by taking our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction into use.

We discovered that our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction were just one of the many paths we had travelled in our attempts to escape from coming face to face with our four basic human attributes.

To escape our powerlessness, many of us had tried to achieve power over various aspects of our life, varying from the cleanliness of our home to taking on high positions in the society.

We imagined that if only we got power over certain people, places, things or situations, we would come to feel content, but even when we felt in control of a certain area of our life we discovered that, most of the time, we did not feel as powerful or content as we had hoped for.

When we investigated the issue even closer, we discovered that we wanted to attain control over these areas because we hoped thereby to achieve the respect and love of others.

We imagined that we had to achieve that others honored us, because we believed that if only we achieved this, we had achieved their love and respect, and then we would be able to accept our self.

We carried out many actions to make others admire and respect us.

Some of us tried to achieve this by becoming famous, but we discovered that even if many knew our face and recognized us as a personality, we still did not feel loved.

Others of us tried to achieve power and glory by moving in the hallways of power.

When we participated in the forming of legislation and the setting up of rules, we felt powerful, even if we knew innermost that in many cases we passed laws about something that we did not understand from personal experience and therefore had no knowledge about it in the true meaning of knowledge.

We realized that we were powerless over that which we were ignorant about so the laws and rules we passed were bound to create manifest chaos and to be broken by those it was supposed to help and create manifest good orderly directions for.

So our powerfulness was a mask we carried, hoping to achieve respect and love from others.

Yet others of us tried to achieve power and glory in our quest to find self-acceptance and contentment by acquiring material wealth way beyond our needs, and when we used these riches to buy the helping hands of others towards fulfilling our needs and desires, we felt powerful and hoped that others' expression of respect and love for us would help us accept our self better and thereby find contentment.

But we became aware that, deep inside, we knew we were manipulating others into showing us respect and love by help of the monetary benefits and gifts we gave them.

We realized that we were fooling our self when we believed that these means gave us respect and love from others.

Even if we would succeed in making others love and respect us, it would still not bring about our own love and respect for our self and thus we needed to develop respect and love for our self to become able to achieve contentment.

So we let go of our attempts to achieve love and respect from others in this way, and instead, we began using our time, energy, interests and money on building up our own life to our contentment.

Some of us amassed spiritual riches way beyond our existential needs in our attempts to achieve power and glory, and thus self-acceptance and contentment.

We hoped that we could use these riches to achieve love and respect from others, but we discovered that even if they were grateful for the information we passed on to them it did not give us the love and admiration that we sought to achieve from them.

Often, they critically scrutinized our life and our character, and they felt let down when they found out that we were human too, and thus limited, ignorant, powerless and mortal/changeable.

No matter how much spiritual information was passed on among us, we realized that we still needed to accept each other's humanness and fallibility.

We also discovered that when many sought our guidance, we had a tendency to feel above others, and this gave rise to arrogance within us.

This development was in strict opposition to our true earthly and spiritual goals, one of which is humility, which consists in neither feeling superior nor inferior to any other being and thus become able to embrace our self and others on all levels of existence.

Therefore, even these attempts to seek power, glory and acceptance could not prevent us from feeling lost, powerless and dissatisfied.

We also realized that the spiritual wisdom we were blessed with is inherent in each one of us as a natural part of our being; so it was not our task to persuade others to believe in anything that was not true for them, but their own task to seek help to come into contact with their inner knowing.

Even when it did seem like we had succeeded in making others honor us, we discovered that this didn't bring us any closer to self-acceptance and contentment in any possible way.

We had been so sure that this was what it took for us to accept our self that we had tried to deny that it was not through others that we achieved self-acceptance but through our own acceptance of our self.

Others of us tried to achieve power and glory by raising our level of energy beyond what was naturally possible for us by ingesting various chemical substances that were harmful to our body and mind so as to force our body and mind to yield more results than they were otherwise capable of.

Also, some of us used these means to silence our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, but we realized that this was an intermediary solution, because, sooner or later, there always came a point in time where our preferred substance turned against us.

Some of us tried to use physical or psychological violence as our means to achieve respect and love from our self or others.

We believed that we could force our self or others to respect and love us without understanding that our and their capacity to show love and respect did not depend on our or their will or desire to show respect and love but on our and their experiences and existential development.

We tried to force our self and others into submission by the help of physical violence such as hurting or harming our physical body or that of others in many different ways and by the help of threatening behaviour towards others such as shouting, door-slamming, throwing and breaking things.

Emotionally and mentally, we resorted to scorning, belittling, ridiculing, lecturing or pretending to be wise on our own or others' decisions and destiny to become able to feel superior to others as yet another way in our attempt to achieve self-acceptance.

However, we always came to a point where it became clear to us that we did not achieve respect and love from others, and more importantly from our self, this way.

Instead, we created manifested fear and discomfort, both in our self and in others.

So in the end, we had to let go of these means in our attempts to achieve self-acceptance, and love and respect in our social life.

Some of us tried to become powerful enough to conquer life and death by throwing our self into studying of medicine and science, hoping that others would come to us and seek our help in healing the pains of their life.

We hoped that, as a result of our help, they would love and respect us, and so we studied, performed experiments and achieved expertise in science and medicine.

But no matter how much knowledge we acquired, we had to face the fact that life and death went on anyway, and in spite of our vast knowledge and capacity to relieve many maladies of life, we were still paining either

materially, physically, space-time-wise, emotionally, thought-wise, socially or spiritually.

We also realized that invariably, we had to face death at some point in our life in spite of all our efforts to survive and live pain-free so this was not the path to achieve the love and respect we sought, either from our self or from others.

When we accepted illness and death as an inevitable part of human life, we realized that the pains of our illnesses gave us information about life that was otherwise not accessible to us, and that death made it possible for us to move into higher spheres of existence, when our physical life was over.

Some of us became so despondent upon these realizations that we withdrew from life, but when we came to AcAdAn, we decided to stop fleeing from life's pains.

We also stopped fleeing from death in all its forms, which actually could be expressed in one word as 'change'.

We began taking care of our pain and the changes that took place in our life all the time with the help of our AcAdAn Program, and as a result, we discovered that both pain and change are advantageous parts of life.

This discovery gave us the courage to investigate the issue, and we discovered that enlightenment and growth lay hidden underneath the pains and changes of our lives.

As long as everything in our life worked to our satisfaction and did not change, unless it was a change we had chosen our self, we did not stop to think deeply about the meaning or purpose of our life, but when we experienced pain, or when our life changed in ways we had not expected, we began investigating the cause of our pain and the reason for the change, and in this process, our awareness and understanding of our life grew.

Most of us were scared of admitting that we needed the driving force of pain and involuntary change in our life to achieve enlightenment, but we realized that not only we, but any creaturemanifestation is a Spirit exploring the information hidden beneath the pains and changes of life, each in our own way.

Thus, we our self were responsible for our pain.

Therefore, we needed the love and compassion of others and they needed ours, because we needed help from each other at times, where we were not able to handle the pains and changes of life by our self.

As a result of this understanding, we did not ask our self how we were guilty in our pains, but what message our pains had to give us, so we could begin to do, what our pain demanded from us, and in this process we often needed the help of others to stop our pain.

Similarly, we did not ask how or why the pain of another gave rise to his/her dissatisfaction but what he/she wanted to do about it and how we could help.

This way, we could help our self and others to arrive at the wisdom that lies at the root of the pain and the involuntary change.

Then, we rose from the ashes of our pain, when the pain itself had been burned to ashes with our new wisdom like the mythical bird Phoenix, who burns down to ashes only to rise again to a new life on a daily basis.

Despite this realization, many of us discovered that we still got angry about our human limitation, ignorance, powerlessness and mortality on a daily basis.

When we became angry about our powerlessness, we carried out many futile actions in an attempt to get beyond our powerlessness.

Sometimes, we became even more embittered when we discovered that our endeavors were to no avail, and thereby, our dissatisfaction with our self and others grew.

After coming to AcAdAn, we accepted that powerlessness is an inevitable part of our humanness, and thus, we let go of our anger and accepted our powerlessness.

When we stopped fighting our powerlessness, we began to see the blessing in it.

We became able to let go of issues over which we were powerless, and in that way, we found ways to use our money, time, energy and interests constructively rather than draining our resources in our futile struggle against our powerlessness.

Some of us were angry about our ignorance and that of others, until we realized that no matter how wise we are today; we will always be wiser tomorrow.

Many of us had equated ignorance with stupidity, and even with evil, and as we neither wanted to be stupid nor evil, we had problems admitting our

ignorance, but when we accepted the fact that ignorance is an integral part of our humanness, we gave up blaming our self and others for not knowing better.

As a result, we became able to admit our ignorance, and when we did that, we became more peaceful because we could stop trying to wring guess work out of our brain on issues we did not know from personal experience, and which we therefore were ignorant about in the true sense of knowing, which is that type of knowing that holds personal experience; so we no longer needed to have an opinion on everything and everybody everywhere at all levels of existence.

That way, we moved closer to self-acceptance and acceptance of others, and as a result, we became more content.

Furthermore, many of us have realized that we are limited in many different ways, but it was hard for us to admit this even to our self, because we felt defiant when we encountered limitations of any kind whatsoever and that could make us wage war against any type of limitations.

We exposed the limitations of our physical body to immense challenges by subjecting it to dangers arising from hazardous actions or chemical dependency.

We exposed our time limitations to many challenges by trying to put more tasks into our 24 hours than was actually possible to accomplish, and yet we kept struggling with our time limitations.

Some of us even became workaholics in our attempts to accomplish more and more in our 24 hours without ever finding it to be enough,

Our workaholism took place at the expense of other areas of our life including caring for our physical body, our emotional and mental well being, the people in our life and our spiritual well being by neglecting doing our daily prayers and our daily meditation.

We also tried to be in many places at once, in the name of ‘multi-tasking and time management’, striving to be omnipresent, in our attempts to challenge our limitations of space and time.

We challenged our self emotionally by denying those emotions that we found to be limiting our freedom to do whatever we wanted; for example, when we were afraid, we defied our fear by doing what we feared instead of respecting our emotion and working with it until we were ready to perform the action in question with trust instead of defiance.

We also had problems accepting the limitations that the emotions of others placed on our actions.

When we found others being unavailable emotionally, we challenged them by forcing our presence on them anyway, and when that resulted in their getting irritated or impatient with us, we became even angrier, and thereby, we moved even further away from contentment.

At the mental level, we had problems accepting our limited knowledge and pretended to know something about everything even if we had neither personal experience in the area nor book knowledge about it.

Because of our feeling offended whenever we were came face to face to our limitations, we had tried to present our self as limitless, and in so doing, we became unable to admit our limitations and thus unable to admit when we felt that our boundaries had been crossed in our social life.

This had a decisive influence on our social life because, thus, other people were not informed properly as to how to be with us in a harmonious way without unknowingly crossing our boundaries.

When we came to AcAdAn, slowly, we began to learn to accept both our own limitations and that of others.

As a result, we stopped overloading our bodies and instead we created manifested space in our day to simply enjoy life as a human being by enjoying our body's seeing sense, hearing sense, tasting sense, smelling sense and feeling sense instead of overcrowding our day with people to meet and things to do.

We respected our own and others' emotions and stopped pretending that we knew something about everything, and as a result, we became more content.

Our most important limitation is the fact that our physical body has a limited span of life, and therefore, we have to separate from our body at some point in time.

For many of us, this fact was scary but gradually as we developed our understanding of our mortality, we came to realize that we are surrounded by death every minute of every day.

We understood that every single minute is different from the minute that just ended, and thus the minute that passed had passed away and that means it had died.

Thereby, we became able to understand that every moment is precious and is forever over, when the next moment is born, and by looking at our mortality through this perspective, it became less frightening, and we became more content.

The realization of our mortality as changeability helped us to see the blessing of it, because we understood that if everything remained the same minute after minute, day after day, our joy of living would soon turn to pain.

No matter what reasons we had to be chronically dissatisfied, we have realized that it didn't matter how and why we took our dissatisfaction into use.

In Active Addictions Anonymous, our recovery began only when we stopped using dissatisfaction, and that meant that we stopped finding reasons to be dissatisfied every day, even many times a day and found reasons to be content every day, many times a day instead.

Dissatisfaction is an imbalance that affects all areas of our lives.

The physical aspect of our imbalance was our inability to abstain from using our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction as a reason to behave in ways that threatened our self and others, like throwing temper tantrums, being violent, or involving our self in activities and addictions that were detrimental to our health.

The emotional aspect was our overwhelming urges to use dissatisfaction whenever we were unable to cope with our body feelings and our emotional feelings.

The thought part was our obsession; our uncontrollable thoughts that forced us to use dissatisfaction even when doing so would destroy our life, and our denial that expressed itself through our much too high thoughts about our self, which rejected any notion of that it could be harmful for us to make use of our dissatisfaction.

Our denial also convinced us that we could get to feel content any time we wanted to, in spite of all evidence to the contrary.

The social part was our obsession with the thought that if only we could get control over others in such a way that they did not do anything, which gave rise to our dissatisfaction we would become able to be content.

The spiritual part of our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction was our reluctance to accept that there was a higher purpose with us being exactly the way each of us were.

We realized that we had rationalized the most outrageous nonsense to justify our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction.

Nobody could convince us that we were active addicts, addicted to chronic dissatisfaction.

This was an admission we had to make to our self.

Before coming to AcAdAn, many of us tried to stop our use of dissatisfaction with the help of willpower, but we found this to be an intermediary solution.

We realized that using willpower did not work for us over time.

When we investigated this aspect further, we discovered that powerlessness over our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction meant that it took our personal power away from us, when we used it just once, so afterwards we felt compelled to keep using it against our will.

We are powerless not only over our dissatisfaction but also over our urge to use it.

We needed to admit this fact.

We had tried several other means to liberate our self from our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction – psychologists, lovers, new places, new people, new jobs or all of these.

Those of us who tried to achieve contentment on our own realized that it was together with others that many undiscovered aspects of our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction surfaced.

This realization showed us that we needed to be together with others to be able to get a true picture of our self.

When we had admitted our powerlessness over our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, we had finished the first part of Step One; but we had to make some more admissions before our foundation was in order.

We needed to admit that our life became unmanageable, when we took our dissatisfaction into use, and we also needed to admit that we needed help, because we were powerless over our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction.

We began to reach out for the help we needed as a result of these admissions.

The Fellowship and the Program of Active Addictions Anonymous offered us that help.

We chose to surrender to the Fellowship and the Program of AcAdAn, and thereby, we began to receive help to overcome the alienation from our self, others and our life that our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction had brought about.

With the newly found hope of coming to live a life of contentment by the help of our work in our AcAdAn Fellowship, we moved on to Step Two.

STEP TWO

WE CAME TO BELIEVE THAT A POWER GREATER THAN US COULD LEAD US TO CONTENTMENT.

After coming to AcAdAn, we discovered that it is a process to come to believe in someone or something greater than us.

Each of us had different ways of approaching this process.

For some of us, coming to believe was equivalent to opening our minds to the possibility that there might be more between heaven and earth than what we were able to perceive with our senses, and this helped us to begin approaching the concept of a Power greater than us.

We discovered that coming to believe in this perception brought hope into our life.

For others of us, it was opening our minds to a reality where miracles – big and small – take place all the time.

As we developed our faith in this perception, gradually, we became full of wonder and amazement as we began to spot the miracles taking place in our lives.

To yet others of us, it meant developing faith in a merciful but incomprehensible Power whose ways are unfathomable.

As a result of coming to believe in this perception, it became easier for us to accept that we might not be able to understand why our Higher Power had endowed us with both virtues and defects of character, but we did not have to believe that our virtues were a reason for our Higher Power to reward us and our defects of character a reason for our Higher Power to punish us.

We have come to realize that the right action is the sweet fruit itself, which means that the joyful consequences of our virtues are enough on their own; likewise, the painful consequences of our defects of character are enough on their own, and both have theirs to give.

To others of us, coming to believe meant developing faith in that our Higher Power is a rational being, who always works on creating manifesting the maximum benefit for all even though our Higher Power's actions might appear incomprehensible to us in the moment.

When we opened our minds to this perception, we realized that we could actually see our Higher Power's loving intention behind everything; even behind the misfortunes and pains of our lives, because when we looked for it, we always came to a point where the loving intention became obvious to us, both behind our fortunes and our misfortunes, our joys and our pains.

This made our life a meaningful journey of discovery that brought us to higher and higher levels of trust in our Higher Power.

Consequently, we discovered that our Higher Power is a loving, caring, compassionate and merciful being, who acts out of loving, caring, compassionate and merciful intentions for all, and we came to perceive both life's pains and joys as an expression of our Higher Power's blessings and love for us.

There were others among us for whom coming to believe was about developing our faith in the perception that a Higher Power is present in the core of each atom of the Universe, and hence in the core of our very being.

When we opened our minds to this perception, we came to perceive our intuition and our interaction with everything and everybody everywhere at all levels of existence as a continuous interaction with our Higher Power.

This way, it became possible for us to feel and experience our Higher Power's presence, influence and work in our personal lives, both within us and in everything and everyone outside of us.

Some of us chose to consider the earthly and the spiritual principles to be our Higher Power, and began opening our minds to these principles.

Gradually, as these principles became an integral part of our perception of life, we became empowered in our decision-making and actions, as we felt that we made our decisions on a firm foundation when we made our decisions and acted on the foundation of these principles.

For some of us, our perception of our Higher Power included both the invisible presence of the earthly and spiritual principles and the visible presence of everything and everybody around us.

When we got firmly rooted in this perception, we were able to recognize our Higher Power in everything and everybody, everywhere, at all levels of existence.

Thus, we lifted the mythological sword of Excalibur, meaning, that we lifted our power of discernment from the earthbound to higher levels of existential understanding.

We had a complete and unconditional freedom, without traps, to perceive our Higher Power in whichever way we chose; but no matter how we chose to look at our Higher Power, the First Step gave us a need to believe that our chosen Higher Power could help us recover from our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction.

The process of coming to believe was similar for most of us and we had to open our minds to the possibility that there existed a Power greater than us that could help us recover from our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, because we by our self were powerless over it.

Today, we have identified and specified that Power by calling it a Power greater than our human limitation, ignorance, powerlessness and mortality and thereby, it became possible for many of us to include our Spirit, our Highest Self, in our understanding and possible choice of our Higher Power.

Our understanding and choice of a Higher Power was up to us.

Nobody could decide it for us.

We could call it the principles of the Program or our Spirit, or we could call it our Group, our Sponsor, our partner, our friend, or everybody who are in our lives, or whatever appeared attractive to us, or we could call it Nature, Reality, the Universe or God.

The only suggested guidelines are that this Power is loving, caring, compassionate and merciful and greater than our human limitation, ignorance, powerlessness and mortality and that coming to believe in this Power worked for us.

The point is that we opened our minds to come to believe in something or someone.

We talked with and listened to others in our Fellowship, and gradually, we discovered that there were one or more of the others in whom we had a special confidence, and thereby, we began trusting.

We sought guidance from the people we had come to trust as to how we could let go of our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, and gradually as our understanding grew with their help, we began feeling that our Higher Power drew us closer and closer to our heart, our true Self.

The process of coming to believe restored our faith in life.

The strength to act came from this faith, and we used Step Two to find out where we were at in the process of coming to believe presently; and thereby, we were ready for Step Three.

STEP THREE

**WE MADE A DECISION TO TURN OUR WILL AND OUR LIFE
OVER TO THE CARE OF OUR HIGHER POWER, *AS WE
UNDERSTOOD THAT POWER.***

We were not required to be religious to take this Step.

We only had to be willing to make an experiment.

We could test our willingness in many ways, even at the greengrocer's.

When we were at the greengrocer's considering if we should choose the small, unripe and cheap apples or the big and ripe but expensive ones, we asked our self which apples our loving, caring, compassionate and merciful Higher Power would want us to eat if for a moment we chose to believe that such a Power existed at all.

Then, we acted in accordance with what we thought our Higher Power wanted for us, choosing to believe that always, and without exception, our Higher Power wanted for us what we wanted most in any situation no matter what it was.

This way, we chose to demonstrate trust in our chosen Higher Power, and at the same time, we opened up to our Higher Power's loving, compassionate and merciful care.

We continued this experiment in as many situations as possible on a daily basis and discovered that the changes that took place in our lives as a result were to our advantage.

We were relieved that we did not have to be religious to be able to accept this idea; and we began feeling comfortable with our Higher Power as a source of strength in our daily life.

The right to have a Higher Power of our own choice is unconditional and without traps.

Because we have this right, it was important that we were honest about who or what we believed in, so as to be able to grow spiritually.

No matter how we chose to perceive our Higher Power, we needed to surrender our will and our life to the care of our chosen Higher Power in Step Three, because we by our self alone were powerless over our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction.

This was a gigantic step, and some of us hesitated.

We feared that our lives would get out of control if we surrendered to a Higher Power, but we shared our fears and reluctance at the AcAdAn meetings and with others, who had experiences with working Step Three.

They shared with us that it was a gigantic step to take the first time we did it, but we could always change our decision if we thought that it was not to our advantage.

They also shared with us that most of us chose to recommit to our decision on a daily basis, when we began our day, as most decisions in our lives are rarely made wholeheartedly but are swinging back and forth in accordance with our emotions and our thoughts and the events in our lives.

Beginning the day by making up our minds if our decision to surrender to our Higher Power's care was also valid today, the decision could slowly grow and become wholehearted.

The gift of the Third Step is that we chose to make this decision for the first time, and thereby, we opened our self to the work of attaining the wholehearted surrender.

The more times we made this decision, the less frightening it became.

Every time we made it, we got new insights about our self in the form of our reluctance and fear that prevented us from making the decision wholeheartedly that day.

We were loving and caring to our self as far as our reluctance and fear were concerned, by continuing to work with them until we reached a point where

all aspects of them were understood and cared for.

Thereby, our reluctance and fear melted away, and we moved forward in our process towards a wholehearted decision of surrender.

Initially, this decision was far beyond the understanding of our day-consciousness but we realized that we had to stay in this process to reaffirm to our self and to our Higher Power that, now, we were willing to put aside our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with self, others and our lives by surrendering to our Higher Power's care.

In Step Three, we investigated our most obvious reluctance and fears of being liberated from our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, and when we reached a point where we could honestly say that we wanted to surrender our will and our life to our Higher Power's care, even if we might be able to do so only for half an hour, we had finished the formal part of the Third Step.

Knowing that we would continue to work Step Three by surrendering to our Higher Power's care on a daily basis, we moved on to Step Four.

STEP FOUR

WE MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS INVENTORY OF OUR SELF.

By working Steps One, Two and Three, we had achieved the level of trust and strength it took to honestly look at our self, and we needed these qualities in Step Four so as to be able to take an inventory of our self and of our life as it had expressed itself until now.

When we got ready to do our inventory, we realized that we had been consumed by our thinking most of our time before coming to AcAdAn.

We found that our thinking was focused on judging our self, others and the World at large on the basis of good and evil, right and wrong, virtues and vices.

We were used to perceiving our self and others as 'good' people when we and they took our virtues into use and as 'bad' people when we and they took our vices, our defects of character, into use.

Now that we were at Step Four, we wanted to begin moving beyond judging our self, others and the World at large on this basis, in order to achieve even greater freedom that could lead us to accept our self, others and the World at large, as everyone and everything is.

To be able to do so, we needed to map out our psychological landscape.

Therefore, we looked at both our virtues and our defects of character as they had expressed themselves in our lives from our childhood until now.

We could do our self-appraisal in any way that worked for us, but as a starting point, we investigated how our use of our defects of character and our virtues had affected us materially, physically, time-space wise, emotionally, mentally, socially and spiritually in the course of our life.

Many of us found the following Rings helpful in identifying the patterns of our defects of character and our virtues.

The below Archetypal Rings are basic mental-emotional patterns of energy whose expression is always the same in each of us, but the way each of us use and experience these patterns is individual and unique.

In our inventory, we set out to explore and identify our own individual and unique ways of using and experiencing these patterns.

In Greek mythology an archetype is found called *Pandora's Box* that is said to release all the miseries of the World if opened.

In AcAdAn, we use the name The Ring of Emptiness for the same archetype, and we perceive this Ring to be the origin of all our defects of character and thus the origin of all of our pains.

In Hindu mythology an archetype is found called the Sudarshan Chakra or the Sun Wheel, that is said to light up our inner World as brightly as the Sun lights up our outer World and thereby the Sun Wheel transforms all of our defects of character to their mature state – to virtues.

In AcAdAn we use the name the Ring of Fulfillment for the same archetype and we perceive this Ring to be the origin of all our virtues and thus the origin of all of our joys.

THE RING OF EMPTINESS AND THE RING OF FULFILMENT



When we investigated our use of the Ring of Emptiness, we discovered that if we found our self in the Ring of Emptiness, when we had empty time ahead of us, our empty time was accompanied by a feeling of boredom, and with the boredom we experienced a sense of meaninglessness that made us wish to abandon our self and our lives and that made us feel lonely, no matter how many people we were surrounded by.

When we investigated our use of the Ring of Fulfilment, we discovered that if we found our self in the Ring of Fulfilment, when we had empty time ahead of us, our empty time was accompanied with a feeling of fulfilment, because we could fill it with something that had our interest and which therefore was meaningful for us and this sense of meaningfulness made us experience a sense of oneness with our self, others and our life, also if we were alone when we were busy with that which we were interested in.

THE RING OF SELF-CENTEREDNESS AND THE RING OF GOD-CENTEREDNESS



We had a tendency to criticize our self, when we felt lonely, were bored or found our life meaningless or empty and praise our self when we felt that our life was fulfilling, interesting, meaningful and that we were in oneness with our true Self and by doing so we had taken the Ring of Self-centeredness into use, so the second set of Archetypal patterns we investigated was our use of the Ring of Self-centeredness and the Ring of God-centeredness.

We investigated how our self-criticism had brought about depression and how our self-praise had brought about euphoria in us, and how this had impacted our life from childhood till today.

We also investigated how our open-mindedness had brought about help from unexpected sources, how this had empowered us to solve our issues, and how this had brought about gratitude and joy in us.

In Active Addictions Anonymous, we want to be led to contentment, and by investigating these patterns that revolves around and around in circles we clearly saw how our contentment was blocked by our self-centeredness and was achieved by help our God-centeredness.

The third set of archetypal patterns that opened up to us as a result of our use of the Ring of Self-Centeredness and the Ring of God-Centeredness were The Ring of Codependency, also known as the Savior Complex, and The Ring of Emotional Sobriety.

The pattern of Codependency settled in us because our self-criticism and depression created manifested a need within us to be praised by others to achieve a state of euphoria, also called artificial joy, springing from self-praise, which for many of us was the only form of joy we knew before we came to AcAdAn.

This artificial joy worked like a drug on us, releasing euphoric high states whenever we sought and received praise from others, and as a result, became able to elapse into self-praise.

THE RING OF CODEPENDENCY AND THE RING OF EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY



By seeking praise from others, we sought a confirmation that our self-praise and euphoria were justified.

When others failed to give us the praise we sought from them, we felt victimized, and this made us angry and disrespectful towards others, as the feeling of being a victim is accompanied by feelings of hostility.

We offended them in our mind's eye by thinking that they were not the way they ought to be, that they ought to change their way of being so that we get to feel good.

At times, we seduced others by claiming to know better than them and their Higher Power as to what their path and their truth in life ought to be or not to be, or by pretending to genuinely care for their wellbeing, whereas we were actually driven by this need for others to take our suggestions to heart, for us to feel better and more valuable than we were able to due to our self-criticism.

To accomplish this, we tried to overwhelm others with our perspectives, to make them believe that we could save them from the pain of their lives if only they followed our directions, seducing them further by concealing the pains of our own life, refusing to acknowledge that we were no wiser, better or more powerful than they and their Higher Power were, and we denied the truth that they had to find their own answers to life just like we had to.

We also investigated our Emotional Sobriety by looking into those instances where we were able to respect our self by taking care of our self materially, physically, time-space wise, emotionally, mentally, socially or spiritually.

We looked into those instances where we respected others by accepting that, just as it is for us, others needed to follow their own path and their own truth in life even if their path or truth might be different from ours.

We also investigated those instances from our past where our detachment came to expression, because we were able to not attach our self to others' material, physical, space- time wise, emotional, mental, social and spiritual issues as if they were our own without however detaching from our love, care, compassion and mercy towards them.

Thereby we gave them time and space to learn from their own experiences and to reach their own truth and to find their own path in life in accordance with it and in that way we showed respect for others.

We also did our best to remember that it is given nobody to help everybody with every issue and that it would not give us joy to help someone if we were not bestowed with the capacity to help out with the issue at hand.

Even if we believed it would bring us joy to help, we accepted that, at times, others had to or wanted to receive help from another source than us.

Furthermore, we realized that this attitude made it possible for us to follow our own path in life and allow others to follow their path without feeling that anything ought to be different.

We also realized that our integrity was to be found at the same level as our capacity to respect our self and others.

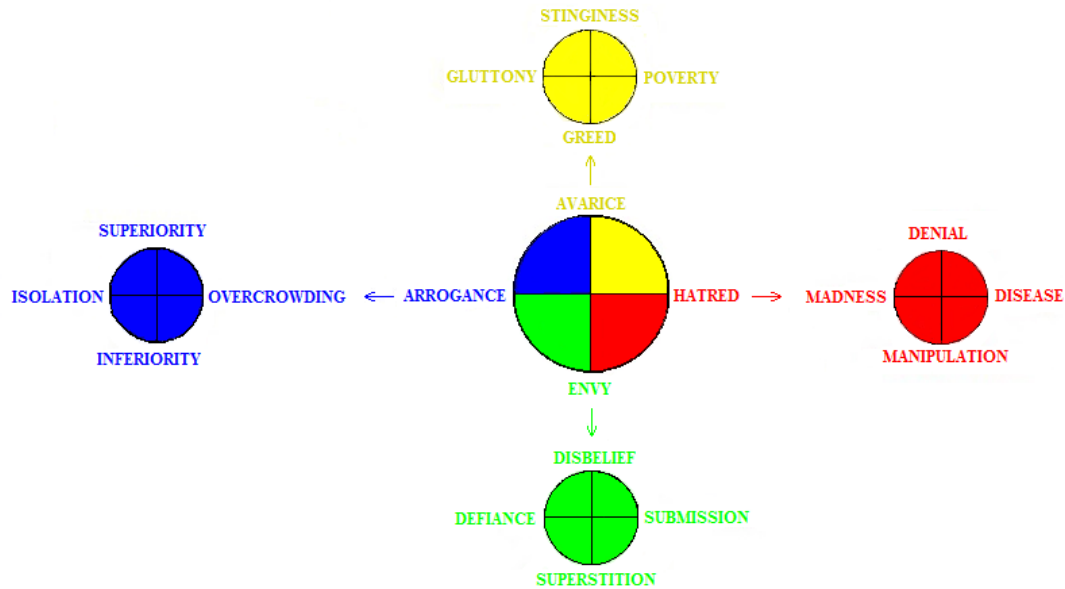
As a result of using our codependency, it became clear to us that arrogance was the natural consequence of our demand on our self that we must be able to save our self and others from the pains of life, because our desire to save our self and others from pain made us pretend that we were superhuman beings, who were not affected by our limitation, ignorance, powerlessness and mortality, and as a result the Big Ring of Pain opened up to us.

As a natural consequence of using the Ring of Emotional Sobriety, we came in touch with the Truth that any creaturemanifestation is equally valuable to creationmanifestation, exactly the way they are, and thus the Big Ring of Joy opened up to us.

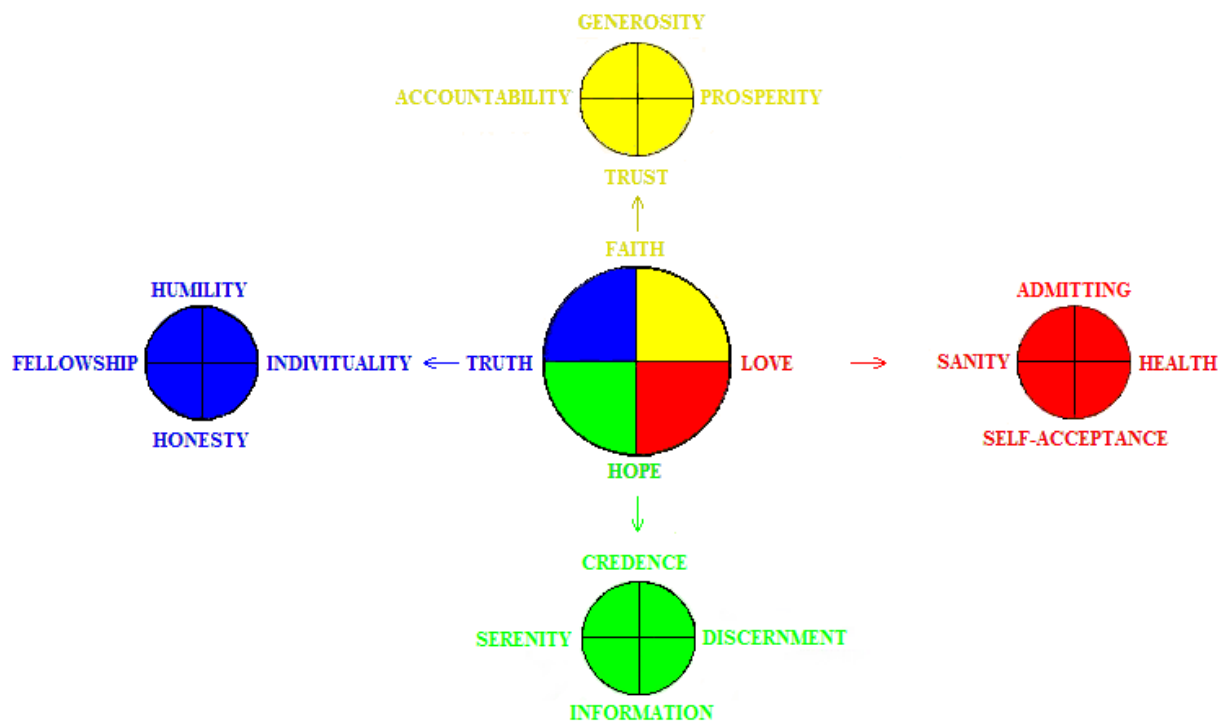
Gradually, as we investigated The Big Ring of Pain and The Big Ring of Joy this way, we understood that these Rings were named so because our defects of character brought us pain and our virtues brought us joy.

The two graphs below show how The Big Ring of Pain and The Big Ring of Joy open up to smaller rings of pain and joy, and the graphs following these two illustrate the big and small rings of pain and joy individually as corresponding pairs.

THE BIG RING AND SMALL RINGS OF PAIN



THE BIG RING AND SMALL RINGS OF JOY



We investigated how our use of each of these patterns had expressed itself in our lives from our childhood till the present day.

All these patterns are like a Chinese box system where each of the attributes of the Small Rings open upwards to the two Big Rings and the two Big Rings open upwards to the Rings of Codependency and Emotional Sobriety that, similarly, open upwards to the Rings of Self-centeredness and God-centeredness that opens upwards to the Rings of Emptiness and Fulfilment.

Likewise, the Small Rings open up downwards, into yet smaller Rings, the Minirings, and each of the Minirings hold the following patterns:

Pettiness, clinging, malaise and hoarding under the Small Ring of Avarice and largesse, letting go, wellbeing and sharing under the Small Ring of Faith.

Insecurity, confusion, unclarity and wretchedness under the Small Ring of Envy and safety, well-informedness, clarity and nobleness under the Small Ring of Hope.

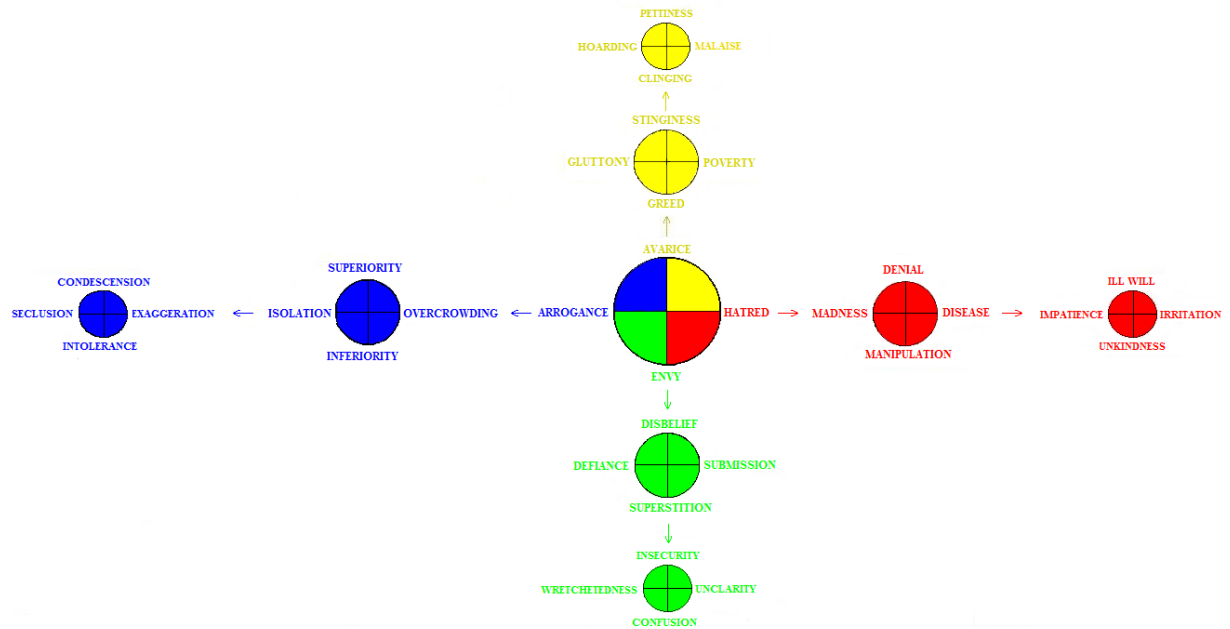
Ill will, unkindness, irritation and impatience under the Small Ring of Hatred and goodwill, kindness, calmness and patience under the Small Ring of Love.

Condescension, intolerance, exaggeration and seclusion under the Small Ring of Arrogance and equality, tolerance, accuracy and belongingness under the Small Ring of Truth.

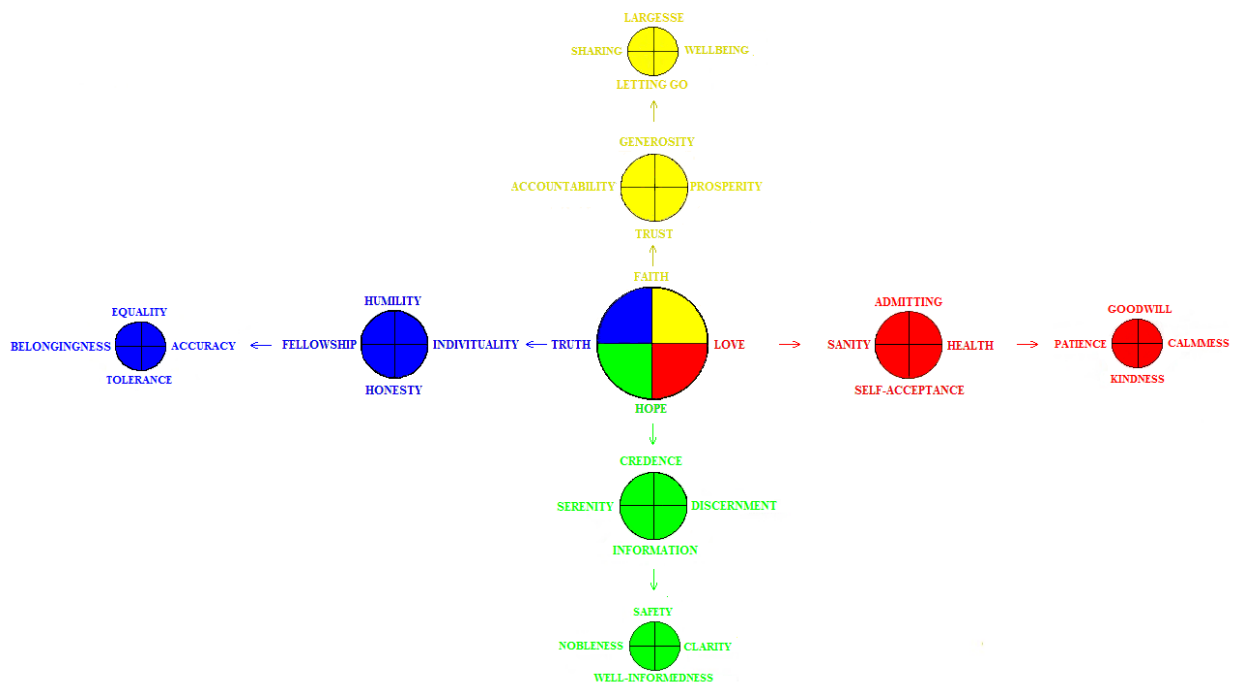
Further, all the Minirings open up downwards to even smaller mental-emotional patterns of energy in the form of the Microrings, that in turn open up downwards into the Nanorings, and thus, the Rings illustrated here merely describe the tip of the iceberg!

The below graphs illustrate the Minirings of Pain and Joy that lie underneath the Small Rings of Pain and Joy.

THE BIG RING, THE SMALL RINGS AND THE MINIRINGS OF PAIN

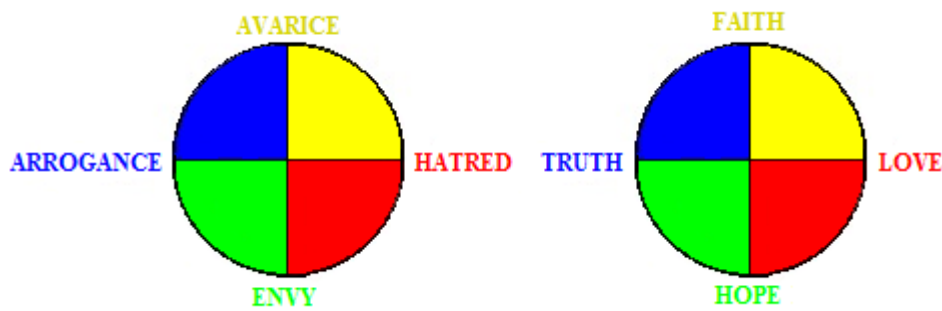


THE BIG RING, THE SMALL RINGS AND THE MINIRINGS OF JOY



However, for our Fourth Step, we did not need to work with the Minirings, Microrings and Nanorings to be able to begin mapping out some of the main characteristics of our psychological landscape.

THE BIG RING OF PAIN AND THE BIG RING OF JOY



The Big Ring of Pain and the Big Ring of Joy gave us a survey of our fully developed defects of character and virtues of the Small Rings of Pain and Joy.

We discovered that when the Big Ring of Pain was active in us, we felt that something was always lacking in our life and therefore we were trying to amass more and more of something or the other (avarice).

We did not believe that we would be able to find contentment ever so we were envious of those people who seemingly were content in life (envy) so we found reasons to be angry all of the time about the fact that we were not able to find that one thing that would bring us contentment, but we suppressed our anger (hatred), and when we had our moments of contentment we felt above others and when our content moment vanished we felt below others (arrogance).

When the Big Ring of Joy became active in us, we discovered that our trust in a Higher Power, in life, in our self, in others gave us the faith we needed (faith) to be able go through the hardships of life full of strength and confidence in a better tomorrow (hope), and so we were able to not loose sight of our feelings of the outstretched hands, the care and the help we received in the midst of our difficulties (love) and in this way we stayed in touch with the Reality all of the time (truth).

THE SMALL RING OF AVARICE AND THE SMALL RING OF FAITH



We discovered that when The Small Ring of Avarice became active in us, we wanted to receive something materially, physically, time-space wise, emotionally, mentally, socially or spiritually without having to use our own money, time, energy or interest to get it (Stinginess), and we readily received anything that we didn't have to make an effort to get (Greed) even if we did not need it (Gluttony), while at the same time, we felt poor in spite of all the things and advantages we possessed (Poverty).

We also discovered that when The Small Ring of Faith became active in us, we believed that our Higher Power gave us what we needed when we needed it (Trust), and we used our Higher Power's gifts to the full or passed the surplus on to others if we did not have any use for it our self (Accountability).

Therefore we passed on our material, physical, time-space wise, emotional, mental, social or spiritual surplus to others who lacked what we had in excess (Generosity), and through these actions, we realized that we indeed had an abundance to give from (Prosperity).

THE SMALL RING OF ENVY AND THE SMALL RING OF HOPE



When The Small Ring of Envy became active in us, we imagined that we could get what others had without doing anything for it (Superstition), and that there was nothing or nobody who would help us get what we so desired if we worked at fulfilling our desires our self (Disbelief).

We got angry if someone suggested that we should participate and contribute with our interest, energy, time or money, like others did, to get the same as they had whether it was material, physical, time-space wise, emotional, mental, social or spiritual (Defiance), or we submitted to various

demands that were contrary to our innermost desires, hoping that others e.g. God, our employer, spouse, friend, family etc. would fulfil our desires if only we threw our self on our knees and flattered them with sacrificial gifts or words of praise (Submission).

When The Small Ring of Hope became active in us, we had faith that our needs and desires would be met if we worked for it (Credence), and that our Higher Power would show us the way ahead (Information).

Therefore, we listened attentively to the guidance of our Higher Power (Discernment) before moving ahead along the shown path, one step at a time (Serenity).

THE SMALL RING OF HATRED AND THE SMALL RING OF LOVE



When The Small Ring of Hatred became active in us, we denied our needs and refused to take responsibility for them, whether they were material, physical, time-space wise, emotional, mental, social or spiritual (Denial), and we tried to manipulate others into fulfilling our needs to have it confirmed that we were valuable (Manipulation).

At the same time, we imagined that others fulfilled our needs because we were so special (Madness), and if others did not fulfil our needs, we continued to deny them until we felt so bad physically, time-space wise, emotionally, mentally, socially or spiritually that we got ill from it (Disease).

When The Small Ring of Love became active in us, we took responsibility for our self by fulfilling our needs materially, physically, time-space wise, emotionally, thought-wise, socially and spiritually (Self-acceptance), and we sought the help of others with those needs that we could not fulfil our self by admitting our need for help to another human being (Admitting).

As we fulfilled our needs this way (Sanity), we experienced an increased well-being in all areas (Health).

THE SMALL RING OF ARROGANCE AND THE SMALL RING OF TRUTH



When The Small Ring of Arrogance got active in us, we felt above others when our needs were met (Superiority), and below others when our needs were not met (Inferiority).

When we felt less than others (Inferiority), we stayed by our self to hide our vulnerability and our feelings of worthlessness (Isolation), and when we felt like more than others (Superiority), we filled up our time and space with people and activities to show off our superiority by the help of the number of people present in our lives and the numerous activities we undertook with these people (Overcrowding).

When The Small Ring of Truth became active in us, we felt that everybody is equally valuable to totality (Humility) even though we were not able to evaluate the full value of our self and others (Honesty).

Therefore, we did not try to evaluate our worth or that of others; instead, we sought to find that part in our self where we recognized the emotions of others (Fellowship), while at the same time, we accepted that we and others may have different reasons to feel the way we did (Individuality).

When we took into use even one of the attributes from any of these patterns, the effect spread like ripples in water, both in our self when we were alone and in our self and others when we were with others.

This ripple effect determined the way others reacted or responded to us, and thereby, the effect of what we projected into the world returned to our self.

When we investigated how we used these attributes and how doing so had affected our lives until now, we had to go through many painful memories, and we became aware that we could either face the pains of our life courageously or react with sorrow.

The process of sorrow moves us through a sequence of emotions namely denial, anger, negotiation, grief and acceptance in several waves, one after the other, in varying order and intensity.

Therefore, we chose to be loving and patient with our self when we were going through the process of sorrow.

We sought help and consolation from each other in AcAdAn, and thus we got the strength to go through the emotions of pain until they subsided.

This way, we were able to let go of the old and give space for the new without being hard on our self.

Over time, after having consciously gone through the process of sorrow a few times, we became more accepting and patient, both with our self and with others, whether it was our own grief of having lost a loved one or our having to deal with a child who had just lost his or her favorite plaything.

Because we accepted that the process of sorrow had to take its course and it took its time whether we wanted it or not, gradually, we learned to not oppose it but to allow it to pass so as to become able to liberate our self from our sorrow that otherwise might turn into bitterness.

We needed to be honest and brave to be able to do this work, and we initiated it by seeking strength from our Higher Power every time we sat down to write about our defects of character and our virtues, and how our use of them had affected our lives till this day.

We were thorough and meticulous in working this Step, aware of the fact that we could write too little but we could not write too much.

We found out that if we did our best, we need not fear that we were not thorough enough.

We were as thorough as we were able to be, and when we worked with our Fourth Step in this way, we succeeded like many others had before us in AcAdAn.

We discovered that no self-appraisal, however thorough it was, had a lasting effect unless followed up by just as thorough a Fifth Step, and with this knowledge we moved on to Step Five.

STEP FIVE

WE ADMITTED THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR CHARACTER TO OUR SELF, OUR HIGHER POWER, ANOTHER HUMAN BEING AND OUR ACADAN FELLOWSHIP.

Step Five was the key to freedom, because it was only through bringing that out into the open which we had discovered in our Fourth Step that we were liberated from our feelings of being victimized by others and life.

When we admitted our Fourth Step to our self by writing our observations down, we got in touch with our self for the first time in this observing and honest way, and we became more conscious of how our life had been until now.

To some of us, it appeared unnecessary to admit our Fourth Step by reading it aloud to our Higher Power, because we thought that our Higher Power was already aware of, what we had written.

However, even if our Higher Power already knew it all, the admission of what we had found out had to come from our own lips.

When we admitted our exact nature to our Higher Power after having admitted it to our self, we opened up to approaching our Higher Power with

something we might otherwise have wanted to rationalize out of the picture by thinking that our Higher Power already knew about it.

This way, we discovered that it did make a difference to admit our Fourth Step to our Higher Power, and at the same time, we also prepared our self to admit the exact nature of our character to another human being.

We also became aware that it was just as important for us to liberate our self from our past successes as it was to liberate our self from our past failures, if we wanted to be able to live in The Blissful Flow of the Present Moment and thus achieve contentment.

Some of us found it difficult to admit to another human being about our dissatisfaction with our self, our lives and our failures, and others of us found it difficult to admit areas where we felt satisfied with our self, our lives and our successes.

In particular, some of us found it difficult to admit those failures that still pained, or admit those successes that were particularly valuable to us.

We feared that others would rub salt into the hurting wounds of our failures by looking condescendingly or scornfully at us, or in case of our past successes, that others would think that we were boastful when we admitted our joy over our successes, or even worse, that they would think that our successes were without any value.

However, it was just as important that we admitted our successes as well as our failures.

To be dishonest on this point created manifested the same difficulties for us as it did in all other areas, and we tried to be brave and stand by our successes and failures as best as we could.

We realized we had avoided looking at many of our successes and failures from our past.

However, our successes and failures had a tendency to grow wild in our mind if they were suppressed, and when they were brought out into the open, they dissolved.

Exactly that had prevented many of us from admitting our successes, because we did not want them to melt away, but we discovered that we could hold on to our successes just as little as we could our failures from the past if we wanted to be able to live in The Blissful Flow of the Present Moment.

Bringing them out in the open put these experiences and our perception of them in perspective, thus, liberating us from the need to depart from the present moment so as to live in the memories of our successes or failures from the past.

Before we came to Active Addictions Anonymous, many of us felt that we could not be fully understood by anyone, and we kept that a secret, which we perceived to be our failures out of fear of the condemnation of others, and we kept that a secret that we perceived to be our successes out of fear of the envy of others.

We realized that we had been unrealistic in thinking this way.

The members of AcAdAn understood us.

However, we had to be careful in choosing the person with whom we wanted to share what we had found out about our self in Step Four.

It was important that we trusted this person.

Only complete trust in the person we chose could give us the courage that was needed to be thorough with our Fifth Step.

Some of us chose to do our Fifth Step with a person who was not a member of Active Addictions Anonymous, although we felt that we would be better understood by one of the other members.

Our choice was up to us.

Nobody could make that choice for us.

When we had made our choice, we moved ahead in confidence with our chosen person.

We strived to be as honest and thorough with our Fifth Step as we could be, because we realized that it was decisive for our progress in our recovery.

Some of us tried to hide parts of our past in an attempt to look better, but we could not afford this mistake.

We had a tendency to live secret lives by hiding behind artificial masks, hoping we could fool others into loving us by the help of these masks.

However, we discovered that the only one we fooled was our self.

Hence, we continued sharing our Fourth Step with honesty and diligence until we were finished.

While working our Fifth Step with our chosen person, we realized that we had difficulties perceiving specific incidents that our chosen person shared from his or her life as successes or failures, and thus we discovered that we had considered some incidents in our life as successes or failures that others did not necessarily perceive in the same way; and in that way we found out that our perception of successes and failures was subjective.

At the same time, we discovered that we could relate to and recognize the emotions a person goes through when he or she perceives something to be a failure or a success.

Upon discovering this, we began to accept that each of us had different perceptions of what success or failure is, but the emotions involved are common to us all.

Thereby, we became aware that we could seek and receive consolation, understanding and fellowship with others if we were brave and honest about our thoughts and our emotions, irrespective of the reasons we had to think and feel the way we did.

We realized that we could not have reached this point on our own.

We needed the help of our Fellowship in Active Addictions Anonymous, and with these discoveries, we moved on to Step Six.

STEP SIX

**WE BECAME ENTIRELY READY TO ALLOW OUR HIGHER
POWER
TO LIBERATE US FROM ALL OF OUR DEFECTS OF
CHARACTER.**

Step Six is often called the Step of Transformation.

We used Step Six to take a look at how that, which we discovered about our self in our Fourth Step expressed itself in our daily life.

When the day was over, we reflected on the events of the day and took a stand on one of the situations of the day and looked at where we took into use the attributes from The Ring of Emptiness, Ring of Self-Centeredness, The Ring of Codependency, the Big Ring of Pain and one of the Small Rings of Pain in the course of our day.

Then, we looked at what came out of it and looked into what we thought we could advantageously change in view of a similar situation in future.

If we thought so we investigated how we thought the situation would have transpired if instead we had used the Ring of Fulfilment, the Ring of Godcenteredness, the Ring of Emotional Sobriety, the Big Ring of Joy or one of the Small Rings of Joy in the Situation.

When we were done with the analyses of the day by the help of the Rings, we discovered that we had become entirely ready to allow our Higher Power to liberate us from the defect of character in question both in the present situation and in a similar situation in the future.

By working in this way with our Sixth Step day after day we slowly became entirely ready to allow our Higher Power to liberate us from all of our defects of character.

In the course of this work, we also discovered what we wanted innermost when we took the various Rings into use, and we found out that when we took the attributes from the Ring of Emptiness, the Ring of Self-Centeredness, The Ring of Codependency and the Big and Small Rings of Pain into use, we generally did not achieve what we truly wanted; on the contrary, we destroyed our possibility of achieving it, but even in those instances where we seemingly achieved what we wanted by the help of our defects of character we experienced discomfort in context with the fulfilment of our desire.

This is exactly why these patterns are considered to be painful and dysfunctional.

Because of this discovery, our willingness to allow our Higher Power to liberate us from our defects of character became further strengthened.

In our work with Step Six, we advanced further in our discoveries of our psychological landscape from Step Four by also beginning to work with the Minirings, the Microrings and the Nanorings of Pain and Joy so as to make our self entirely ready to allow our Higher Power to liberate us from all of

our defects of character.

We made our self entirely ready to allow our Higher Power to liberate us from our defects of character by investigating how our defects of character affected us in our daily life socially, mentally, emotionally and energetically by first and foremost working mentally, emotionally and energetically with the energy fields of the Rings, also known as Archetypes.

And then, we found ways in which we could consciously move socially, mentally, emotionally and energetically from the Rings of Pain to the Rings of Joy and through this work, little by little, we became entirely ready to allow our Higher Power to liberate us from all of our defects of character.

We began to work with the Rings by learning to move consciously from the Ring of Emptiness to the Ring of Fulfillment.

THE RING OF EMPTINESS AND THE RING OF FULFILLMENT



Instead of being scared at the prospect of that boredom with the accompanying meaninglessness and loneliness that we might experience in a moment from now when we have some empty time ahead of us without having something interesting to use it for we decided to take plenty of time to contemplate what we wanted to use our empty time for.

In our contemplation we let our thoughts come and go as they wanted, until we felt a thought emerged from our innermost Self with an idea we found interesting and that we therefore could use to fill up our empty time in a meaningful way whether that which had emerged was to go straight into oneness with our self through meditation, or it was to begin a major project or just go ahead taking a good long bath for the next hour or so, make a good stew over the next few hours or call a good friend to have a chat.

Then we learned to move from the Ring of Self-centeredness to the Ring of God-centeredness.

THE RING OF SELF-CENTEREDNESS AND THE RING OF GOD-CENTEREDNESS



Instead of criticizing our self for the mistakes we thought we had made in the course of a day, we chose to open our mind to ideas and ways to remedy those mistakes, whether those ideas sprang from within us or from outside us through others.

This way, we were empowered to set right our mistakes instead of sinking into despondency and depression.

Instead of praising our self for the successes we thought we had achieved in the course of a day and thereby creating manifesting a short-lived euphoria from the thought of how great we thought we were, we chose to focus on our gratitude about the help we received in the course of the day that made our success possible, whether the help sprang from within or without.

This way, we achieved the joy of living in the solution of our problems rather than living in their pain, and if we thought or felt that we were powerless over the issue, we surrendered it to our Higher Power's care and let go of it.

We also took a look at how we could move from the pain of our Codependency to the joy of our Emotional Sobriety, by looking at how we could move from the attributes in the Ring of Codependency to their corresponding attributes in the Ring of Emotional Sobriety.

THE RING OF CODEPENDENCY AND THE RING OF EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY



Instead of thinking that we had to save others from the consequences of their thoughts, emotions or actions so as for us to be able to feel good about our self, we respected their right to own the consequences of their thoughts, emotions and actions, and hence, we gave them time and space to find their own solutions, and at the same time, we gave our self the right to the same.

We detached from others' material, physical, time-space wise, emotional, mental, social and spiritual issues without detaching from our love, care, compassion and mercy for them, and thus, we maintained our detachment.

Instead of seducing others by hiding our own pain or by pretending that we were wiser than them and their Higher Power so as to make them change according to our perception of the right thing, we gave them time and space to express their thoughts, emotions and actions according to their own perception of the right thing.

We also gave our self time and space to express our perception of the right thing without trying to force our understanding on others or to overwhelm them with our perception.

We maintained our integrity by taking from the perspective of the others what was useful to us and allowing others to take from our perspective what they found useful to them without trying to overwhelm or overpower others with our own perspectives.

Instead of offending others by saying or thinking that they thought, felt and acted wrongly, we chose to respect that they needed to think, feel and act in accordance with their reality as it was for them.

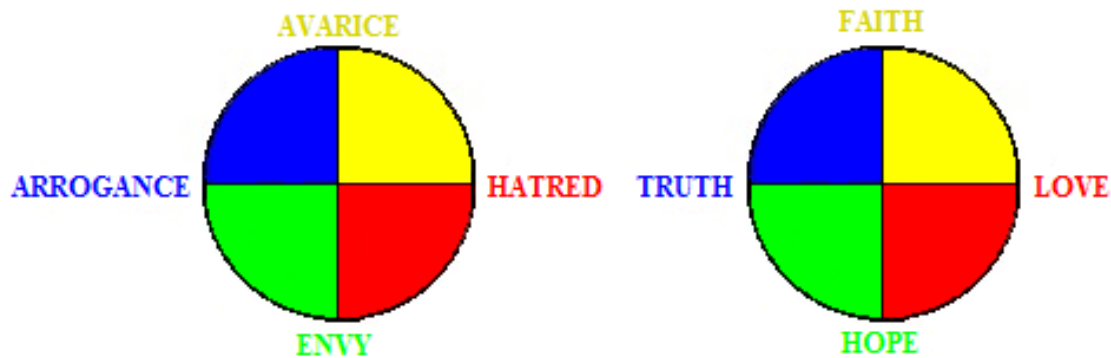
In the same way, we allowed our self to think, feel and act in accordance with our Reality as it was for us, and thus, we maintained respect for our understanding of Reality.

Instead of thinking that we had to sacrifice our time, energy, money and interests for others to be able to feel that we were good people, we accepted

that we needed to take care of our own needs first by the help of the time, energy, money and interests our Higher Power had put at our disposal for the purpose.

Only after having done so, we passed on to others our surplus time, energy, money and interest, in such situations and ways where we found joy in passing on our surplus, and in that way, we maintained our Emotional Sobriety.

THE BIG RING OF PAIN AND THE BIG RING OF JOY



Instead of avariciously holding on to our material, physical, time-space wise, emotional, mental, social or spiritual possessions and amassing more and more, we chose to have faith that we could pass on our surplus to others and thus experience the joy of our abundance.

Instead of arrogantly thinking that we were above or beneath others, we accepted that we were ignorant and that we did not know the true value of our self and others; so we chose to let go of the pain of our arrogance and move into the joy of meeting others with humility, which means, neither thinking that we were above them nor beneath them.

Instead of enviously thinking that we could never achieve what others had, we chose to move forward in life with hope that we too could achieve what we wanted if we worked for it, by learning from those we envied as to how they had achieved what they had or were.

Instead of suppressing or ignoring our anger and thus allowing it to become hatred, we admitted to our self, our Higher Power and another human being that we were angry, and we found out what we felt deprived of or which of our boundaries we felt were transgressed.

We decided how we would take care of our self in the future in similar situations without hurting our self or others.

We were thorough and prompt in admitting our anger to our self, to prevent it from striking root within us and turn into hatred that could crystallize and settle in us as a constantly nagging and miserable bitterness.

Thus, when we approached and healed our angry thoughts and emotions both mentally, emotionally and energetically, in loving and respectful ways, we could move beyond the anger, to the joy of feeling love for our self and others.

After having worked with learning to move from the Big Ring of Pain to the Big Ring of Joy, we dived deeper in our Sixth Step work, by learning to move from the Small Rings, the Minirings, the Microrings and the Nanorings of Pain to the Small Rings, the Minirings, the Microrings and the Nanorings of Joy.

The following tables show the characteristics of the Big Rings, the Small Rings, the Minirings, the Microrings and the Nanorings of Pain and Joy followed by two graphs that illustrates these Rings.

THE BIG RINGS, THE SMALL RINGS, THE MINI-RINGS, THE MICRO-RINGS AND THE NANO-RINGS OF PAIN

THE FOUR BIG RINGS OF PAIN				
	North	South	East	West
The Ring of Emptiness	Emptiness	Boredom	Meaninglessness	Loneliness
The Ring of Self-centeredness	Euphoria	Depression	Self-criticism	Self-praise
The Ring of Co-dependency	Savior-role	Seducer-role	Victim-role	Offender-role
The Big Ring of Pain	Avarice	Envy	Hatred	Arrogance
THE FOUR SMALL RINGS OF PAIN				
	North	South	East	West
Avarice	Stinginess	Greed	Poverty	Gluttony
Envy	Disbelief	Superstition	Submission	Defiance
Hatred	Denial	Manipulation	Disease	Madness
Arrogance	Superiority	Inferiority	Overcrowding	Isolation
THE FOUR MINI-RINGS OF PAIN				
	North	South	East	West
Avarice	Pettiness	Clinging	Malaise	Hoarding
Envy	Insecurity	Confusion	Uncertainty	Wretchedness
Hatred	Ill will	Unkindness	Irritation	Impatience
Arrogance	Condescension	Intolerance	Exaggeration	Seclusion
THE FOUR MICRO-RINGS OF PAIN				
	North	South	East	West
Avarice	Selfishness	Hardness	Unfreedom	Negligence
Envy	Denigration	Insusceptibility	Narrowmindedness	Unworthiness
Hatred	Indignation	Vindictiveness	Belligerence	Bitterness
Arrogance	Disrespect	Craftiness	Distortion	Separateness
THE FOUR NANO-RINGS OF PAIN				
	North	South	East	West
Avarice	Inhibition	Nervousness	Complaining	Indifference
Envy	Uncertainty	Uncultivatedness	Indecision	Rashness

Hatred	Resentment	Unwillingness	Vociferousness	Stiff-neckedness
Arrogance	Insincerity	Cunning	Unreliability	Alienation

THE FOUR BIG RINGS OF PAIN				
	North	South	East	West
The Ring of Emptiness	Emptiness	Boredom	Meaninglessness	Loneliness
The Ring of Self-centeredness	Euphoria	Depression	Self-criticism	Self-praise
The Ring of Co-dependency	Savior-role	Seducer-role	Victim-role	Offender-role
The Big Ring of Pain	Avarice	Envy	Hatred	Arrogance
THE FOUR RINGS OF AVARICE				
AVARICE	North	South	East	West
The Small Ring	Stinginess	Greed	Poverty	Gluttony
The Mini-ring	Pettiness	Clinging	Malaise	Hoarding
The Micro-ring	Selfishness	Hardness	Unfreedom	Negligence
The Nano-ring	Inhibition	Nervousness	Complaining	Indifference
THE FOUR RINGS OF ENVY				
ENVY	North	South	East	West
The Small Ring	Disbelief	Superstition	Submission	Defiance
The Mini-ring	Insecurity	Confusion	Uncertainty	Wretchedness
The Micro-ring	Denigration	Insusceptibility	Narrowmindedness	Unworthiness
The Nano-ring	Uncertainty	Uncultivatedness	Indecision	Rashness
THE FOUR RINGS OF HATRED				
HATRED	North	South	East	West
The Small Ring	Denial	Manipulation	Disease	Madness
The Mini-ring	Ill will	Unkindness	Irritation	Impatience
The Micro-ring	Indignation	Vindictiveness	Belligerence	Bitterness
The Nano-ring	Resentment	Unwillingness	Vociferousness	Stiff-neckedness
THE FOUR RINGS OF ARROGANCE				
ARROGANCE	North	South	East	West
The Small Ring	Superiority	Inferiority	Overcrowding	Isolation
The Mini-ring	Condescension	Intolerance	Exaggeration	Seclusion
The Micro-ring	Disrespect	Craftiness	Distortion	Separateness
The Nano-ring	Insincerity	Cunning	Unreliability	Alienation

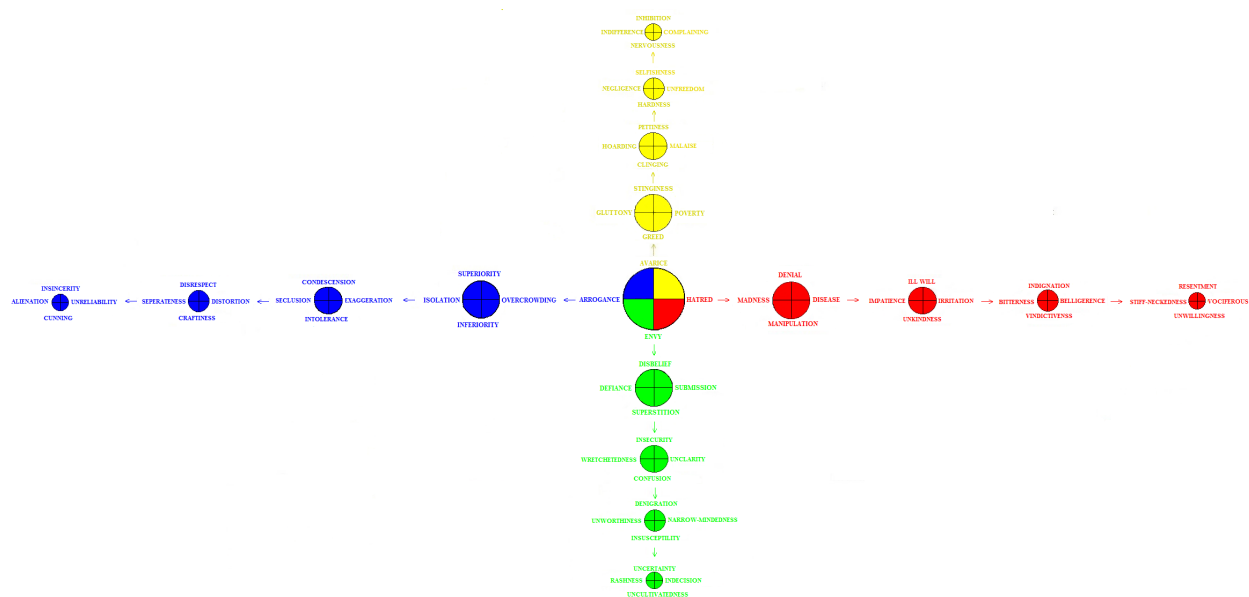
**THE BIG RINGS, THE SMALL RINGS, THE MINI-RINGS, THE MICRO-RINGS AND
THE NANO-RINGS OF JOY**

THE FOUR BIG RINGS OF JOY				
	North	South	East	West
Ring of Fulfillment	Fulfillment	Interest	Meaningfulness	Oneness
Ring of God-centeredness	Joy	Empowerment	Open-mindedness	Gratitude
Ring of Emotional Sobriety	Detachment	Integrity	Respect for self	Respect for others
The Big Ring of Joy	Faith	Hope	Love	Truth
THE FOUR SMALL RINGS OF JOY				
	North	South	East	West
Faith	Generosity	Trust	Prosperity	Accountability
Hope	Credence	Information	Discernment	Serenity
Love	Admitting	Self-acceptance	Health	Sanity
Truth	Humility	Honesty	Individuality	Fellowship
THE FOUR MINI-RINGS OF JOY				
	North	South	East	West

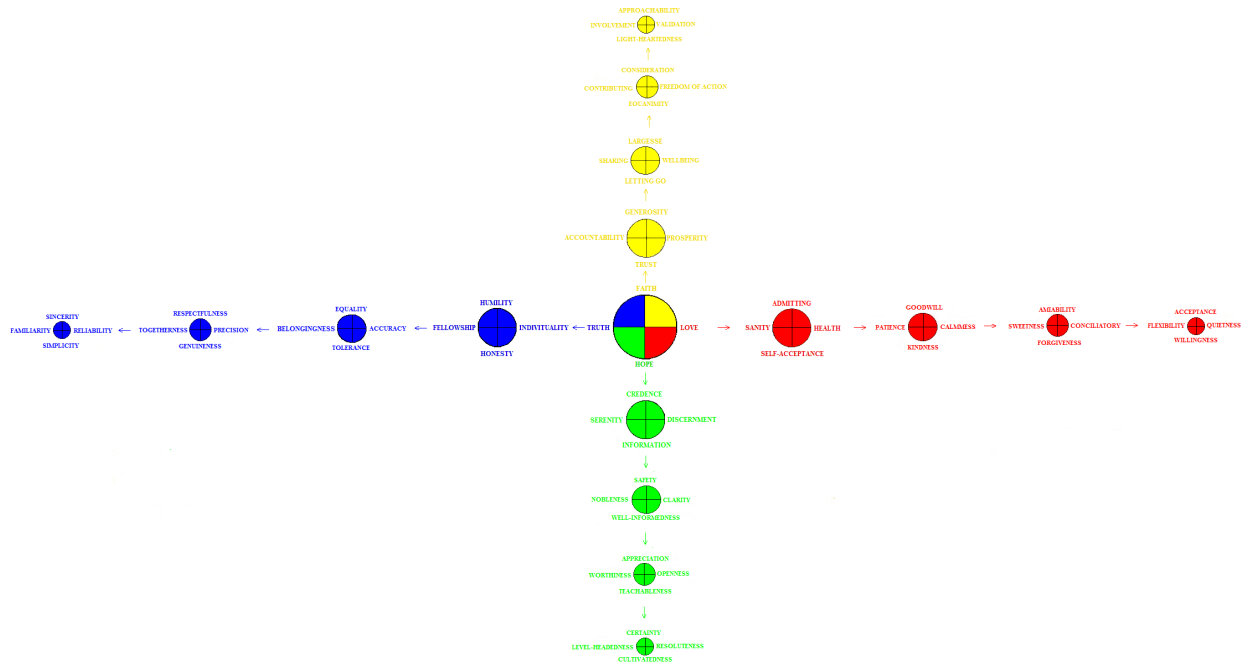
Faith	Largesse	Letting go	Wellbeing	Sharing
Hope	Safety	Well-informedness	Clarity	Nobleness
Love	Goodwill	Kindness	Calmness	Patience
Truth	Equality	Tolerance	Accuracy	Belongingness
THE FOUR MICRO-RINGS OF JOY				
	North	South	East	West
Faith	Consideration	Ease	Action-freedom	Contributing
Hope	Appreciation	Teachableness	Openness	Worthiness
Love	Amiability	Forgiveness	Conciliatory	Sweetness
Truth	Respectfulness	Straightforwardness	Precision	Togetherness
THE FOUR NANO-RINGS OF JOY				
	North	South	East	West
Faith	Approachability	Light-heartedness	Validation	Involvement
Hope	Certainty	Cultivatedness	Resoluteness	Level-headedness
Love	Acceptance	Willingness	Quietness	Flexibility
Truth	Sincerity	Simplicity	Reliability	Familiarity

	North	South	East	West
Ring of Fulfillment	Fulfillment	Interest	Meaningfulness	Oneness
Ring of God-centeredness	Joy	Empowerment	Open-mindedness	Gratitude
Ring of Emotional Sobriety	Detachment	Integrity	Respect for self	Respect for others
The Big Ring of Joy	Faith	Hope	Love	Truth
THE FOUR RINGS OF FAITH				
FAITH	North	South	East	West
The Small Ring	Generosity	Trust	Prosperity	Accountability
The Mini-ring	Largesse	Letting go	Wellbeing	Sharing
The Micro-ring	Consideration	Ease	Action-freedom	Contributing
The Nano-ring	Approachability	Light-heartedness	Validation	Involvement
THE FOUR RINGS OF HOPE				
HOPE	North	South	East	West
The Small Ring	Credence	Information	Discernment	Serenity
The Mini-ring	Safety	Well-informedness	Clarity	Nobleness
The Micro-ring	Appreciation	Teachableness	Openness	Worthiness
The Nano-ring	Certainty	Cultivatedness	Resoluteness	Level-headedness
THE FOUR RINGS OF LOVE				
LOVE	North	South	East	West
The Small Ring	Admitting	Self-acceptance	Health	Sanity
The Mini-ring	Goodwill	Kindness	Calmness	Patience
The Micro-ring	Amiability	Forgiveness	Conciliatory	Sweetness
The Nano-ring	Acceptance	Willingness	Quietness	Flexibility
THE FOUR RINGS OF TRUTH				
TRUTH	North	South	East	West
The Small Ring	Humility	Honesty	Individuality	Fellowship
The Mini-ring	Equality	Tolerance	Accuracy	Belongingness
The Micro-ring	Respectfulness	Straightforwardness	Precision	Togetherness
The Nano-ring	Sincerity	Simplicity	Reliability	Familiarity

THE BIG RING, THE SMALL RINGS, THE MINIRINGS, THE MICRORINGS AND THE NANORINGS OF PAIN



THE BIG RING, THE SMALL RINGS, THE MINIRINGS, THE MICRORINGS AND THE NANORINGS OF JOY



Many of us also chose to use Step Six to work on becoming willing to allow our Higher Power to liberate us from our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, and for this, we used the Serenity Prayer, praying:

THE SERENITY PRAYER

God,
Grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

In order to be able to see the difference between the things we could change and the things we could not change, we chose to make a dissatisfaction list every day by writing down hour by hour what we were dissatisfied with in the hour that passed.

Thereby, that which we were powerless over from the things we were dissatisfied with became clear to us, and we used Steps One to Five to achieve acceptance of our powerlessness so thereby we could become able to let go of our dissatisfaction.

In those areas where we could change the things we were dissatisfied with,

we gathered our courage to make the changes, and we were gentle with our self by giving our self time and space to make the changes at a pace we were able to bear.

This way, by being thorough, meticulous and committed to do this work day after day, gradually, we became entirely ready to be liberated from all of our defects of character by allowing our Higher Power to transform them to their corresponding qualities in the Rings of Joy.

But it was important for us to remember that we are human beings and are thus limited, ignorant, powerless and mortal/changeable, so that we did not set unreal expectations on our self.

This Step is exclusively about achieving the willingness to be liberated from all of our defects of character and not about becoming super human beings.

When we felt that we had become entirely ready, we were ready to move to Step Seven.

STEP SEVEN

WE HUMBLY ASKED OUR HIGHER POWER TO LIBERATE US FROM ALL OF OUR DEFECTS OF CHARACTER.

Step Seven consists of two parts, and the first part we could do immediately after finishing Step Six.

As we were now entirely ready to become liberated from all of our defects of character, we quite simply asked our Higher Power to liberate us from all of them.

There are many ways of doing this.

Some of us got down on our knees and prayed out loud and intensely while others of us sat down quietly and prayed to our Higher Power to liberate us from all of our defects of character.

Some of us found a quiet spot in nature to pray while others of us prayed together with our Sponsor.

Yet others of us went to our sacred place of worship and prayed there.

It did not matter how we chose to pray; it was completely up to us to choose what worked for us.

However, after having prayed for being liberated from all of our defects of character, we discovered that our defects of character were still there.

Thereby, we became ready to work the second part of Step Seven.

With the first part of Step Seven, we had shown our Higher Power and our self that we were entirely ready to be liberated from all of our defects of character.

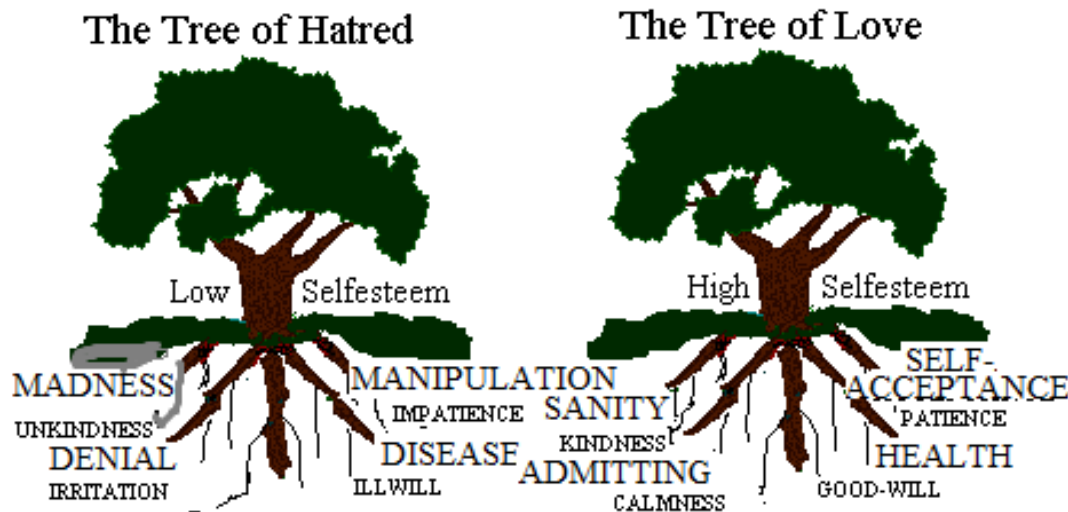
Now, we began to cooperate with our Higher Power about being liberated from them.

First, we needed to find out what our part of the work consisted of.

To find this out, we needed to have an overall idea of the nature of this part of our Seventh Step work.

We could achieve this by using the below illustration of *The Tree of Hatred* and *The Tree of Love* as a representation of our defects of character and our virtues.

THE TREE OF HATRED AND THE TREE OF LOVE



Even if it was our defects of character that we were working with in our Seventh Step, we threw a quick glance at the corresponding virtues to form an impression of where we would be when our defects of character were transformed.

We always had the freedom to choose another way to survey our Seventh Step work.

The most important thing was that the way we chose worked for us.

Those of us, who chose to use the symbolic image of the trees for this purpose, imagined that the soil in which the tree grew was the situation that we inventoried, and the small cilia found on the finest roots of the tree that drew nourishment from the soil were various thoughts and emotions that we took into use in that situation.

The cilia in The Tree of Hatred, for example, could be irritation, impatience, unkindness and ill will.

The fine roots in turn provide the sustenance for the bigger roots that are a symbol of our more complex mental and emotional patterns like denial, manipulation, insanity and illness.

From here, the sustenance ascends into the trunk, which in The Tree of Hatred is a symbol of a mental-emotional pattern of low self-esteem.

From there, it ascends to the crown, which is a symbol of the fully developed defect of character, in this case, hatred, also known as suppressed anger.

We realized that if our Higher Power pulled up the whole Tree of Hatred with its roots all at once or thereby instantly transformed it into a fully

developed Tree of Love, when we prayed to be liberated from all of our defects of character, by the help of transformation we would probably feel so alienated from our self that we might go insane from it or even die from shock.

Hence, we began cooperating with our Higher Power on a daily basis about doing this work at a pace we would be able to bear and sustain.

At this point in our Seventh Step work, most of us discovered that if we waited to apply Step Seven until, for example, our irritation had developed into hatred, often, the feeling had gained so much power over us that we were not able to or willing to make use of Step Seven.

Therefore, we chose to begin our Seventh Step work by working on those feelings and thoughts that were to be found in the defects of character in the Nanorings, the Microrings, the Minirings and the Small Rings of Pain so as to nip the pain as early as possible in its becoming:

AVARICE

The Nanoring (Inhibition, Nervousness, Complaining, Indifference)

The Microring (Selfishness, Hardness, Unfreedom, Negligence)

The Miniring (Pettness, Clinging, Malaise, Hoarding)

The Small Ring (Stinginess, Greed, Poverty, Gluttony)

ENVY

The Nanoring (Uncertainty, Uncultivatedness, Indecision, Rashness)

The Microring (Denigration, Insusceptibility, Narrow-mindedness, Unworthiness)

The Miniring (Insecurity, Confusion, Unclearity, Wretchedness)

The Small Ring (Disbelief, Superstition, Submission, Defiance)

HATRED

The Nanoring (Resentment, Unwillingness, Vociferousness, Stiff-neckedness)

The Microring (Indignation, Vindictiveness, Belligerence, Bitterness)

The Miniring (Ill will, Unkindness, Irritation, Impatience)

The Small Ring (Denial, Manipulation, Disease, Madness)

ARROGANCE

The Nanoring (Insincerity, Cunning, Unreliability, Alienation)

The Microring (Disrespect, Craftiness, Distortion, Separateness)

The Miniring (Condescension, Intolerance, Exaggeration, Seclusion)

The Small Ring (Superiority, Inferiority, Overcrowding, Isolation)

We took forward this work by working with:

The Big Ring of Pain (Avarice, Envy, Hatred, Arrogance)
 The Ring of Codependency (Savior, Seducer, Victim, Offender)
 The Ring of Self-centeredness (Euphoria, Depression, Self-criticism, Self-praise)
 The Ring of Emptiness (Emptiness, Boredom, Meaninglessness, Loneliness)

We cooperated with our Higher Power by staying aware and observing when our defects of character surfaced.

As soon as we observed a defect of character like irritation from the Mining of Hatred become active within us we prayed to our Higher Power: God (or the name of our chosen Higher Power), liberate me from this irritation.

If we were meticulous in cutting off the cilia from the roots of the tree from passing on its sustenance into the finer roots, from where it passed on into the bigger roots and up through the trunk to the crown, we cut off the Tree of Hatred from receiving its sustenance.

Thus, our part of the work consisted in that we prayed to our Higher Power to liberate us from our defects of character every time we discovered them arising within us in the course of the day, and our Higher Power's part was to liberate us from them, by transforming them.

Already in Step Six, we discovered that when we worked on becoming fully conscious of the effect a given defect of character had on our life and our actions, light was shed on it.

The light of our consciousness is an energy form that supplies the defect of character with sufficient energy to perform a quantum leap to a higher energy form that in the least is not destructive and in its best form is a complete transformation to the corresponding virtue of that defect of character.

In Step Seven, we used this knowledge consciously by giving a specific defect of character conscious attention, so when we observed that a defect of character rose to the surface, we focused on it and prayed to our Higher Power to liberate us from it.

If needed, we stopped our other activities to concentrate fully on our prayer.

As we began cooperating with our Higher Power this way, we discovered that the Seventh Step began working for us.

Some of us used a prayer that covers most of our defects of character as our Seventh Step Prayer, and we used this prayer at adequate moments in the course of the day, thinking or saying, “God, liberate me from this self-important seriousness.”

In some cases, we became aware of a defect of character rising to the surface due to a sense of emotional discomfort without us being able to put a name to it, and in such cases, we prayed to our Higher Power to liberate us from this defect of character without naming it.

Some of us had the idea that we did not want to put a name on our defects of character, that our focus need not be on our defects of character but on the corresponding virtue that we need to move into.

We thought it would be better to say a prayer, for example, to attain patience when we were impatient.

However, we realized that it was important for us to remember that the work with consciously moving from a defect of character to the corresponding virtue constitutes Step Six, and the work with liberating our self from active defects of character in various situations, while the situations are happening, belongs in Step Seven.

Therefore, we only focused on our defects of character when we asked our Higher Power to liberate us in our Seventh Step prayer, and we surrendered the work of their transformation to our Higher Power.

If we wanted to dive deeper into our corresponding virtues, we could always do so by the help of Step Six.

Sometimes, we discovered that our Higher Power did not remove a particular defect of character in us, for example, our impatience, in a given situation even if we prayed for it.

From this, we realized that our Higher Power wanted us to take a closer look at what our impatience had to tell us.

Therefore, we took up the issue during our inventory of the day, and used Step Six to work with the transformation of our defect of character in a gentle and loving way.

If we discovered that the transformation still did not happen, we used Steps Four and Five to investigate the issue even closer and to talk it through with our self, our Higher Power and another human being.

Even if we were thorough when we did this work, we did not set up impossible expectations on our self by imagining that we would become flawless, because we knew that as a human being we are limited and ignorant, and thereby fallible.

Even when we become aware of our flaws, we discover to our dismay that we cannot change our flaws at will due to our powerlessness but must work on changing them and then wait for our Higher Power's grace to come to our aid, to help us when we our self have done our utmost to make way for our Higher Power's grace to change us.

Thus, we became aware that we would continue to make mistakes, and we would still need our Program; we would continue to need guidance, help and consolation from everything and everyone around us, so as to get empowered to find solutions and move on instead of getting stuck in various immature and dysfunctional patterns.

Gradually, as we had learnt to apply Step Seven as often in the course of a day as we became aware of our defects of character surfacing, we were ready to move on to Step Eight.

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STEP EIGHT

WE MADE A LIST OF ALL THOSE WE HAD HARMED, BEGINNING WITH OUR SELF, AND BECAME WILLING TO MAKE AMENDS TO ALL.

We used Step Eight to liberate our self from feelings of guilt, and thereby, from shame.

Therefore, many call this Step ‘the Step of Forgiveness’ as forgiving our self liberates us from guilt and shame.

We found it advantageous to set a time limit for this work, because we knew that we could always remember something more from our past that we wished we had done differently, and this might prolong our work in Step Eight in a way that could keep us stuck in Step Eight in our Stepwork.

When we had completed the formal part of Step Eight, which was about liberating our self from the guilt and shame that we carried from our past, we could use this tool according to our needs in our daily life.

As a part of this continuing process, at a later point, we could also add issues from our past to our list that we happened to recollect in the course of our day that we wished we had done differently.

In Step Four, we looked at the wrongs we thought that others had done to us so as to be able to reverse the process concerning the guilt and shame that we thought others ought to feel for what they did to us.

By taking responsibility for our own part in such situations in Step Four, we were at long last able to let go of our feelings of being victimized by others.

In the same way, in Step Eight, we reversed the guilt and shame that we thought we ought to feel for the wrongs we thought we had done to our self and others, by taking responsibility for our feelings of guilt and shame and deciding to make amends for our wrongs.

This way, we were finally able to forgive our self and return to our true state of innocence.

We began by looking at what we considered to be harm today seen through the eyes we had gained through working the first Seven Steps in Active Addictions Anonymous.

Therefore, we took an honest stand on how we had harmed our self and others materially, physically, time-space wise, emotionally, mentally, socially and spiritually.

We looked at the harm we had inflicted on our self and others by destroying some of our possessions and that of others, whether the things were big or small, or whether we did it on purpose or not.

What was important was not whether it was a big or small thing, or if we did it on purpose or not, but whether we felt guilty about it and therefore were ashamed of our action.

Our purpose with this Step was, however, neither to indulge in our mistakes from the past nor to seek forgiveness from others, but to take a look at those areas of our lives we felt guilty about, and which therefore made us feel ashamed of our self.

Thus, we could begin liberating our self from guilt and shame, both of which are lethal poisons to our spiritual life, and at the same time, achieve the capacity to forgive our self.

We knew that the one we had the hardest time forgiving was our self.

We also knew that forgiveness could not be practiced as a decision, that it had to spring from the heart, which means that we were able to forgive our self when we acknowledged that we had made a mistake as compared to our chosen goal, had made amends for the mistake, and had a desire to not make a repetition of the same mistake.

We brought all those areas out in the open that we felt guilty about from our childhood till today.

Then we made a decision about how we could restore the damages we thought we had caused, and thus, we became empowered to liberate our self from our feelings of guilt and shame.

First, we looked at how we have harmed our self physically in various ways, for example, by denying or ignoring our physical needs.

We looked at how we had harmed others physically by turning violent and causing physical harm, for example, by slapping, pushing or beating them, and we included our children too in this list.

We looked at how we had harmed our self time-space wise by depriving our self of the time and space that we needed for our self so as to be able to take care of our basic needs and personal interests.

In this context, we also looked at how we had harmed our self by overcrowding our day with people to meet or chores to do.

Further, we investigated how we had harmed our self by trying to take all our time and space for ours self and thereby isolating our self from others as well as depriving them of their need for our time and space.

This way, we actually deprived our self of the nourishment, inspiration and intimacy we needed from others.

We also looked at how we had harmed others time-space wise by demanding more of their time and space than we needed and thus depleting them of the time and space that they needed to take care of themselves or their other loved ones, and we included our parents, our significant other and our children in this list.

We took a closer look at how we had harmed our self and others emotionally by hurting or putting our self and others down in our thoughts, words and actions, and how we had harmed our self and others mentally by lying, manipulating, concealing or distorting the facts of our life.

We looked at how we had harmed our self and others socially and love wise by either isolating our self and thus depriving our self and others of the love and care we all need from each other or by overcrowding our lives and thereby losing out on intimacy and closeness with others.

We also looked at how we had harmed our self and others in context of love by treating our self and others with anger and hatred, depriving our self as well as others of the love and understanding that we needed from each other.

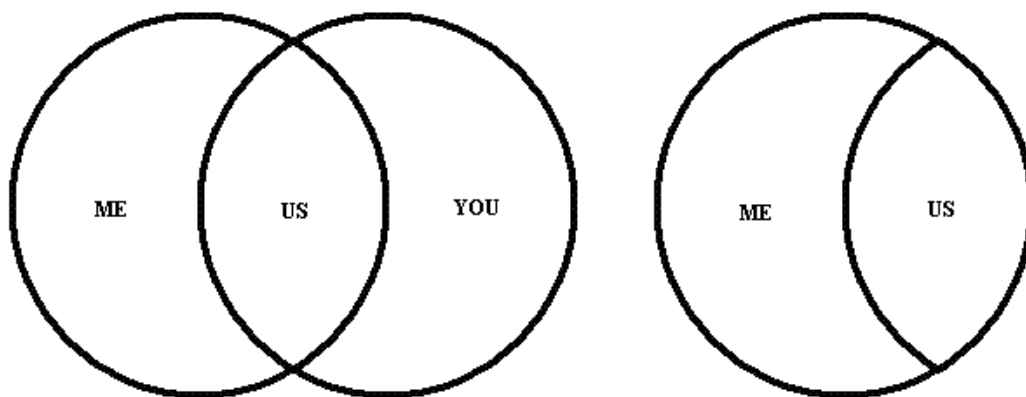
We looked at how we had harmed our self and others spiritually with our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with our self, others and our life.

By being chronically dissatisfied, we deprived our self and others of the joy that is an integral part of being God-centered.

In the end, we also investigated how we had harmed our self and others by taking into use those attributes from The Ring of Emptiness, The Ring of Self-Centeredness, The Ring of Codependency, The Big Ring of Pain and the various Rings of Pain that we worked with in Steps Four, Five, Six and Seven but had not addressed as yet in terms of making amends.

We also made use of the below two graphs called The Rings of Social Interactions so as to be able to investigate how harming others, in actual fact, harmed our self too.

THE RINGS OF SOCIAL INTERACTIONS



By the help of these Rings, we could easily see that there is a 'me', an 'us' and a 'you' in any social interaction, be it in the fleeting interaction with a stranger on the street, with our green grocer, colleagues, friends, siblings, parents, our children or our significant other.

If we pulled our own life-circle out from the intertwined circles, we saw that almost half of our personal life-circle was consumed by the 'us' in any social interaction.

From this, we could see that it would also settle as a hurt in our own life-circle if we hurt another; so when we investigated the harm we had done to others we, at the same time, looked at how we had harmed our self in doing so.

When we had completed our list, we went through it point-by-point, and we wrote down how we wanted to make amends.

Then, we approached our Higher Power by reading our list point-by-point, praying for guidance as to how we could make amends for the harm we had caused.

We wrote down our impulses to make changes or add something more to our list of amends that occurred while we read our list, taking this to be our Higher Power's suggestions for restoration.

After this, we read our list and our ideas of amends to another human being and took his/her suggestions for changes to heart, as much as we possibly could.

Through this work, we found out that some amends were made silently by our change of behaviour, some were made as an agreement between our Higher Power and us, some were made indirectly if the person we wanted to make amends to was not accessible to us in one way or another through helping out another person in a similar situation as the person we wanted to make amends to, and some amends were made directly by approaching the person/s involved in the issue.

In the end, we set aside a day that we called the Sacred Day of Forgiveness, where we went through our list point-by-point and forgave our self for the mistakes we had made in the past, and thus, we were ready to move on to Step Nine.

STEP NINE

WE MADE AMENDS TO OUR SELF AND OTHERS EXCEPT WHEN DOING SO WOULD CAUSE MORE HARM TO US OR OTHERS

We made amends to our self and others except when doing so would cause more harm to us or others.

In Step Nine, we began to make those amends that we had decided upon in our Eighth Step.

When we began making our amends, we sometimes discovered that some of the areas we had brought out in the open had been forgotten by the people involved or had not been considered by others as something serious at all, and we felt a great relief upon discovering that we had not nearly as much reason to be ashamed as we had imagined.

Gradually, as we progressed in our Ninth Step, we experienced how relieved we felt about resolving all such situations from our Eighth Step list, one after another, and therefore, many call Step Nine The Step of Liberation.

Even though we longed for this liberation, we accepted the fact that we had to be patient and wait for the right circumstances to occur to make each of these amends; but we did not use this to postpone a Ninth Step we could do now.

We shared our Ninth Step experiences with others and listened to their experiences too.

We shared with our Sponsor how far we had come with our amends and asked for our Sponsor's help in ascertaining if we were too slow or too hasty in working our Ninth Step.

If we had harmed others materially or physically, they might not be willing to forgive us for this harm, but we tried to make amends to them anyway, unless we thought that they were still so embittered by our action that it was dangerous for us to approach them.

If that was the case, we made indirect amends by helping another person who was in the same situation as the person we had harmed, and by making a decision to not harm another materially or physically from hereon.

We shared with all the people to whom we owed amends what we were into and that we wouldn't have acted today like we did at the time, when the harm took place, if we had known then what we know today, and then we offered our amends.

Sometimes, the amends we offered were accepted and sometimes not.

Sometimes, the one we had harmed forgave us and at other times the person was not ready to forgive us.

We accepted this, knowing very well that now we had done our best, and we let go of the situation.

In the same way, we approached all those we wanted to make amends to, whether it was one person, a group or society as such.

In some instances, we thought that the one we needed to make amends to had harmed us too or had been the cause for the situation to occur, but in this work, we only dealt with our own feelings of guilt and not with others' guilt or the lack of it.

We took responsibility for that part which we felt guilty about, and let go of their feelings of guilt or the lack of it as something which is between them and their Higher Power.

When we had made amends for the mistakes of our past, we let go of them and the harm done whether we achieved the forgiveness of others or not because we did not do our Ninth Step to achieve the forgiveness of others, but to take responsibility for our part of the harm so that we could become able to forgive our self and let go of guilt and shame.

We also knew that we were limited, ignorant, powerless and mortal/changeable, and thus fallible, and as such, we knew that we would make mistakes in the future too.

Instead of being hard on our self by expecting to be flawless from hereon, we drew hope from Steps Eight and Nine, knowing that we could use them to right our wrongs, whenever we made a mistake as revealed to us seen in the light of our AcAdAn Program.

By applying these Steps in our daily life, we became able to keep our path free of guilt and shame.

Having cleared up our past, we wanted to continue this process and benefit from it in our daily lives, and towards this purpose, we used Step Ten.

STEP TEN

**WE CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY AND WHEN
WE WERE WRONG PROMPTLY ADMITTED IT**

In Step Ten, we continued to work Steps 1-9, by honestly admitting the wrongs we had done in the course of our day as compared to our goals, and admitting how that made our life unmanageable.

Sometimes, we observed in the course of the day that we felt we were not liberated from a defect of character in spite of our applying Step Seven, and this told us that we needed to work more in depth on our becoming entirely ready for this defect of character to be removed.

We used Step Six so as to become entirely ready to have our defect of character transformed, through gaining a deeper insight into the exact nature of what brought about our using this defect of character and what it was that we hoped to achieve by using it.

Then, we made a decision as to how we wanted to act under similar circumstances in future, in order to achieve what we wanted without having to go through the pain we felt when we took a defect of character into use.

If we felt that the transformation of our defect of character still did not take place, Step Five to seek help from an inventory from Step One to Four, from our Higher Power and from another human being.

We used Step Eight to find out if we had harmed our self and others in the course of the day, and if so, we planned our amends, forgave our self our mistake and used Step Nine to make amends as soon as we could.

After having forgiven our self, we let go of our wrong and moved on to making our amends with a clear conscience.

When we were wrong, we didn't try to explain to others how or why we committed a mistake, because thereby we harmed our self and others.

Trying to explain our wrong is an expression of our wish to defend our wrong, and of our expectation that the person we had harmed must approve our mistake by understanding or accepting it.

We remembered that attack is the first act of violence and defence the first act of war, and an explanation would be an expression of our desire to defend our wrong.

We simply admitted our wrongs, made amends, and then let go of them, and if we were still not able to forgive our self, we applied Step Two to open our minds to the loving, caring, compassionate and merciful intention of our Higher Power behind our pain.

When we had found out what, in our eyes, could be our Higher Power's loving intention, we used Step Three to surrender to what we found out in Step Two.

We also inventoried our right actions in the course of the day by the help of our discoveries in Steps 1-9, because we wanted to remember that the right action is the sweet fruit itself.

When we inventoried how the right action brought joy into our day, it became easier for us to remember how we could choose the right action in any situation, and thereby, we were ready for Step Eleven.

STEP ELEVEN

THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION, WE SOUGHT TO IMPROVE OUR CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH OUR HIGHER POWER, *AS WE UNDERSTOOD THAT POWER*, PRAYING ONLY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF OUR HIGHER POWER'S WILL FOR US AND THE POWER TO CARRY THAT OUT.

We continued the work we began in Steps Two, Three and Seven, by using Step Eleven to improve our conscious contact with our Higher Power.

Therefore, this Step is often called 'The Step of Consciousness Expansion'.

For the expansion of our conscious contact with our Higher Power, we used prayer and meditation.

In our personal Spiritual Program, we chose to begin the day by seeking contact with our Higher Power, so as to receive guidance as to how we could go through the day in accordance with our Higher Power's will for us.

Some perceived our approach to our Higher Power as prayer and our Higher Power's answer to be meditation.

To be able to hear our Higher Power's guidance, we had to empty our mind from all thoughts and turn silent.

Some of us thought that we already knew from the beginning of the day what our day was going to be used for; so we found it superfluous to ask our Higher Power for guidance and to turn silent to get an answer.

We discovered that this was a rationalization we took into use because we didn't think we had the required time to turn silent and listen.

Hence, we decided to follow the suggestion of Step Eleven anyway, as it was just as important for us to nurture our spiritual life as it was to nurture our worldly life, and therefore, we set aside time for it, just like we set aside time for our other daily activities.

When we began to seek our Higher Power's guidance on a daily basis, we discovered that our ability to distinguish the voice of our Higher Power from our own began to develop, and thus Step Eleven began working for us.

Sometimes, our Higher Power surprised us by giving us guidance that changed our own perceptions of how this day should be used.

If we thought that it created manifested a disturbance in our worldly interests to follow our Higher Power's will for us, we tried to do it anyway to see where it took us.

Gradually, as we experienced the outcome of such actions, it dawned on us that it was more advantageous for us to follow our Higher Power's will for us than our own, and our faith and confidence in our chosen Higher Power grew as a result.

Thereby, we discovered that our Higher Power drew us deeper and deeper into our innermost heart, and to our amazement, we realized that our Higher Power's will for us expressed itself in a multitude of ways.

Sometimes, our Higher Power spoke to us humorously and sometimes seriously; sometimes from within our self and sometimes from outside us through everything and everybody, everywhere, at all levels of existence, but always and without exception, with unconditional love, care, compassion and mercy.

We maintained contact with our Higher Power throughout the day by praying for our Higher Power's guidance before we began each and every new activity in the course of the day, as to how we could accomplish the task at hand in accordance with our Higher Power's will for us, and we then prayed for the power to carry out the task to the best of our abilities in accordance with this.

Then, we became silent until we felt that our Higher Power had given us an impulse as to how we could go about this task in the best way possible, and we moved forward accordingly.

When the task was over, we thanked our Higher Power for the guidance we received, just like we thanked our Higher Power for the guidance we had received through the day through everything and everybody before we went to sleep.

Sometimes, it turned out that what we thought to be our Higher Power's guidance for us, in actual fact, was not so, or we would have got distracted and diverted from the guidance we received while going about the task, and in such instances, we used our Tenth Step, admitted our mistake, planned our amends, forgave our self and restored the situation as best as we could.

When we had made our amends to the best of our ability, we let go of our wrong and moved on.

Some of us thought it wasn't necessary to seek our Higher Power's will for us so often in the course of a day as we had done so at the beginning of the day itself.

When we chose to do it anyway as an experiment, we discovered that many things we had taken for granted took a different turn if we first approached our Higher Power about them, and gradually, as we discovered the advantages doing this held, we began making it a habit.

In our attempt to expand our conscious contact with our Higher Power, we encountered our limited consciousness as human beings.

These limitations prevented us from surveying all areas of our lives.

In the course of our Stepwork, we had investigated different areas of our physical life, our life in time and space, our emotional life, our thought life, our social life and our spiritual life, and we discovered that different principles applied to different levels of our existence.

We all were familiar with the principles of our physical existence so well that we could move around effortlessly in the physical world without colliding with other physical beings or objects.

By respecting and taking care of our emotions, we began to get used to be in the condition of the astral plane, the fifth dimension, where our emotions move effortlessly, without collision or conflict either within us or with the emotions of others.

By using our thoughts in a reflective manner, like a mirror that merely reflects our surroundings without judging on the grounds of good and evil, we began to get used to be in the condition of the mental plane, also known as the Plane of Wisdom, the Causal plane or the sixth dimension, where our thoughts move effortlessly, without any friction or conflict in our mind as well as between our thoughts and the free flow of the thoughts of others.

Our mind consists of strings of thoughts that we have created manifested from a combination of our experiences with our material life, our physical life, our life in time and space, our emotional life, our thought life, our social life and our spiritual life.

Our thinking Mind is also called our ego and has the task of guiding us about how best we can handle our life; however, in the course of our Stepwork we discovered that our thinking mind was dysfunctional due to lack of information or due to flawed information that had made us draw wrongful conclusions about our self, others and our life.

By the help of our Stepwork and our Higher Power, we now began to correct our flawed information and conclusions, by redirecting our thinking from dysfunctional and immature thinking to functional and mature thinking and by allowing our Spirit to take up more and more space in our mind when no thinking was required, which we discovered, was most of the time.

When we entered the contemplative condition, which is called Prayer, if our contemplation deals with the spiritual sphere, we began to learn how to concentrate our awareness consciously, in one singular point of focus.

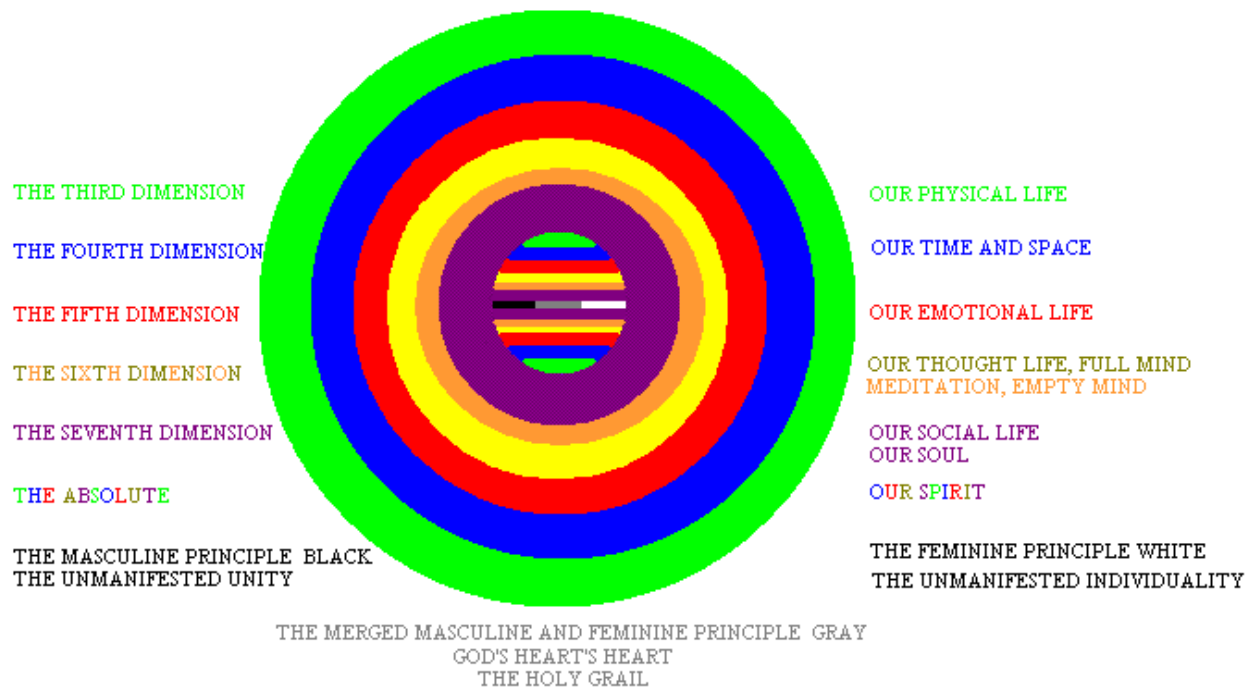
When we had achieved this capacity, we began getting used to the condition of the Divine Plane, the seventh dimension, described variously as the Soul Plane, the Heavens, Nirvana, the Garden of Eden etc., where love, care, compassion and mercy move effortlessly.

When we began to learn to consciously empty our point of concentration from all thoughts, we moved into the meditative state, which is also called the Silence or the emptiness in the focus point.

When our focus point became empty, we became able to achieve the direct experience of our Spirit, our Highest Self, and thereby we became able to see, hear, feel and sense our Spirit's presence from where unconditional love, care, compassion and mercy flows through our entire being from our innermost core.

Thereby, it became easier for us to move freely through all our levels of existence without meeting resistance from those emotions and thoughts that sprang from our experiences in our physical life, the third dimension.

OUR PLANES OF EXISTENCE



To enter into meditation, we moved from our normal state of daily consciousness into the reflective state, then into the contemplative state, from there into the concentrated state of our mind, and in the end, we let go and entered into meditation, where our consciousness expanded.

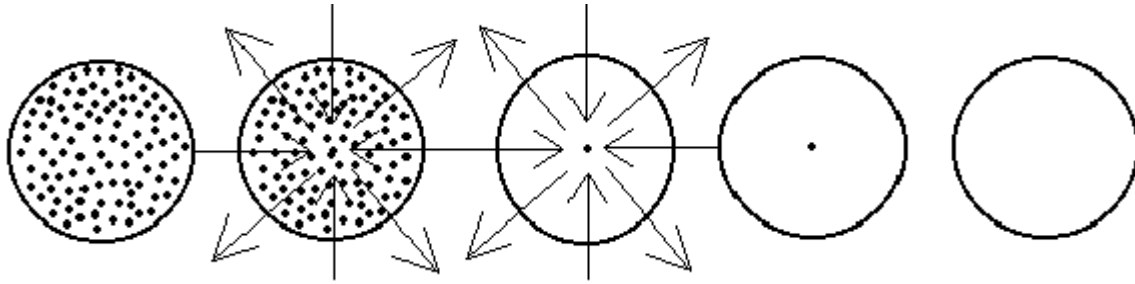
Thus, the process of meditation consisted of withdrawing our consciousness from being focused on the outer world into our inner point of concentration, and then letting go so that the expansion of our consciousness could take place.

The graphs below illustrate these states of consciousness.

Each circle represents one of our states of mind and the dots in them represent our thoughts in the various states of mind.

LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Ordinary Meditation	Reflection	Contemplation	Concentration
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The first circle shows a normal state of mind with many thoughts, producing various emotional states set into motion by our thoughts.

The next circle represents a reflective state of mind, where thoughts and emotions enter and leave without us maintaining any particular idea or holding on to any particular thought, and the resultant emotional state.

The third circle shows a contemplative state of mind, where the thoughts are concentrated on an object, a word, a mantra, a koan or a prayer, and where they wander to and fro the point of concentration.

The fourth circle shows a concentrated state of mind, where all other thoughts but the object of contemplation have disappeared.

The fifth circle shows a meditative state of mind, where there is no thought activity but a direct experience of Reality, and this is called the Silence or the emptiness in the focus point, which is a prerequisite for the direct experience of our Higher Power's presence.

In Step Eleven, we chose to consciously use all these means to expand our conscious contact with our Higher Power.

When we began our contemplation, we could choose any prayer that worked for us.

We had chosen to look at our Higher Power as loving, caring, compassionate, merciful and greater than our human limitation.

Therefore, we could approach our Higher Power in many different ways that could give us an experience of a loving, caring, compassionate and merciful Higher Power, such as our 12-Step Program, the earthly and spiritual principles, God, our Spirit, love that flows as the life energy between us and others, everything and everybody everywhere at all levels of existence, or any other understanding and experience that we had of a loving, caring, compassionate and merciful Higher Power's presence.

The most important thing was that it worked for us to interact with our Higher Power.

The Eleventh Step suggests only to pray for knowledge of our Higher Power's will for us and the power to carry that out.

This meant that we wanted to know our Higher Power's will for us, which is, in Reality, our own will for our self when we are not blinded by our thoughts and emotions.

When praying for the power to carry that out, we were actually praying for the capacity to overcome our thoughts and emotions that stood in our way.

If we did not have any ideas for prayer our self, these are the prayers that many of us used as an object of contemplation both in the group and in solitude.

The below prayer is called the Eleventh Step Prayer, because we use it to initiate and expand our conscious contact with our Higher Power so as to receive knowledge of our Higher Power's will for us, and to seek the power to carry it out.

THE ELEVENTH STEP PRAYER

The 'I' Version

God,
I meditate to expand my conscious contact with You,
to seek knowledge of Your will for me this day,
and to seek the Power to carry that out.

The 'We' Version

God,
We meditate to expand our conscious contact with You,
to seek knowledge of Your will for us this day,
and to seek the Power to carry that out.

After having repeated this prayer four times, we become silent to listen for an impulse from our Higher Power as to what is our Higher Power's will for us.

We can also use this prayer every time we have completed a task in the course of the day and are about to begin a new one.

The below prayer is called the Seventh Step Prayer, because through this prayer, we ask our Higher Power to liberate us from a pattern of wrongs that consists of most of our defects of character.

THE SEVENTH STEP PRAYER
(the short version)

The 'I' Version

God,
Liberate me from this self-important seriousness.

The 'We' Version

God,
Liberate us from this self-important seriousness.

We can also choose to use this longer version of the Seventh Step Prayer, especially when we are working with the Rings:

THE LONG SEVENTH STEP PRAYER

God,

Liberate me from using self-important seriousness and all the Rings of Pain today:

The Ring of Emptiness and thereby emptiness, boredom, meaninglessness and loneliness

The Ring of Self-centeredness and thereby self-criticism, depression, euphoria and self-praise

The Ring of Codependency and thereby the savior, seducer, victim and offender roles

The Big Ring of Pain and thereby avarice, envy, hatred and arrogance

The Small Ring of Avarice and thereby stinginess, greed, poverty and gluttony

The Small Ring of Envy and thereby disbelief, superstition, submission and defiance

The Small Ring of Hatred and thereby denial, manipulation, disease and madness

The Small Ring of Arrogance and thereby superiority, inferiority, overcrowding and isolation

The Miniring of Avarice and thereby pettiness, clinging, malaise and hoarding

The Miniring of Envy and thereby insecurity, confusion, unclarity and wretchedness

The Miniring of Hatred and thereby ill will, unkindness, irritation and impatience

The Miniring of Arrogance and thereby condescension, intolerance, exaggeration and seclusion

The Microring of Avarice and thereby selfishness, hardness, unfreedom and negligence

The Microring of Envy and thereby denigration, insusceptibility, narrow-mindedness and unworthiness

The Microring of Hatred and thereby indignation, vindictiveness, belligerence and bitterness

The Microring of Arrogance and thereby disrespect, craftiness, distortion and separateness

The Nanoring of Avarice and thereby inhibition, nervousness, complaining and indifference

The Nanoring of Envy and thereby uncertainty, uncultivatedness, indecision and rashness

The Nanoring of Hatred and thereby resentment, unwillingness, vociferousness and stiff-neckedness

The Nanoring of Arrogance and thereby insincerity, cunning, unreliability and alienation.

THANK YOU!

The below prayer is called the Third Step Prayer, because we ask our Higher Power to take over our will and our life.

THE THIRD STEP PRAYER

The 'I' Version

God,
take my will and my life,
and show me how I can live
in complete compliance with
my true Self, my Spirit.

The 'We' Version

God,
take our will and our life,
and show us how we can live
in complete compliance with
our true Self, our Spirit.

The below prayer is called the Gratitude Prayer, because we accept that whatever comes our way this day is our Higher Power's will for us and for that we are grateful.

THE GRATITUDE PRAYER

The 'I' Version

God, You know what this, Your child, needs today.

The 'We' Version

God, You know what these, Your children, need today.

The below prayer is called the God's prayer, because we pray to be united with our Spirit and thus with God.

THE GOD'S PRAYER

The 'I' Version

God

You are the only true goal of my life
 I'm yet but a slave of my wishes
 putting bar to my advancement
 and You are the only God and Power
 Who can take me up to that stage.

The 'We' Version

God

You are the only true goal of our life
 We are yet but slaves of our wishes
 putting bar to our advancement
 and You are the only God and Power
 Who can take us up to that stage.

The below prayer is called the Serenity Prayer, because we ask for serenity and thereby the capacity to come into contact with our Higher Power.

THE SERENITY PRAYER

The 'I' Version

God, grant me the serenity
 to accept the things I cannot change,
 the courage to change the things I can,
 and the wisdom to know the difference.

The 'We' Version

God, grant us the serenity
 to accept the things we cannot change,
 the courage to change the things we can,
 and the wisdom to know the difference.

THE PRAYER OF JOY

The below prayer is called the Prayer of Joy because we use all the Rings of Joy as our object of contemplation.

God,

Grant me the capacity to make use of all the Rings of Joy today:

The Ring of Fulfillment and thereby fulfillment, interest, meaningfulness and oneness

The Ring of God-centeredness and thereby open-mindedness, empowerment, joy and gratitude

The Ring of Emotional Sobriety and thereby detachment, integrity, respect for self and respect for others

The Big Ring of Joy and thereby faith, hope, love and truth

The Small Ring of Faith and thereby generosity, trust, prosperity and accountability

The Small Ring of Hope and thereby credence, information, discernment and serenity

The Small Ring of Love and thereby admitting, self-acceptance, health and sanity

The Small Ring of Truth and thereby humility, honesty, individuality and fellowship

The Miniring of Faith and thereby largesse, letting go, wellbeing and sharing

The Miniring of Hope and thereby safety, well-informedness, clarity and nobleness

The Miniring of Love and thereby goodwill, kindness, calmness and patience

The Miniring of Truth and thereby equality, tolerance, accuracy and belongingness

The Microring of Faith and thereby consideration, equanimity, freedom of action and contributing

The Microring of Hope and thereby appreciation, teachableness, openness and worthiness

The Microring of Love and thereby amiability, forgiveness, conciliatory and sweetness

The Microring of Truth and thereby respectfulness, straightforwardness, precision and togetherness

The Nanoring of Faith and thereby approachability, light-heartedness, validation and involvement

The Nanoring of Hope and thereby certainty, cultivatedness, resolution and level-headedness

The Nanoring of Love and thereby acceptance, willingness, quietness and flexibility

The Nanoring of Truth and thereby sincerity, simplicity, reliability and familiarity

THANK YOU!

THE TWO WAY PRAYER

The two-way prayer is easy to do, and consists of a conversation between the member's Higher Power and the member.

The two-way prayer was perceived as more important to the members of the original Twelve Step Program than reading the Twelve Step Fellowship's literature, attending meetings, participating in sponsorship/recovery partnerships, and Step Work.

The member sits down with a pen and a notebook and silences his/her mind by the help of the Eleven Step Prayer and then writes in his/her notebook:

Name of the members chosen Higher Power,
I seek your guidance today about (the member writes down his/her chosen topic)

Then he/she focuses on his/her breath and allows an answer to rise from within him/her, and when he/she has received his/her answer, he/she writes the answer down.

THE SMILE MEDITATION

The below contemplation is called The Smile Meditation, and in this we use the healing power of our smile together with the healing power from the central part of our brain's hormone-producing center, where the thalamus-, hypothalamus-, pineal- and pituitary gland meet in one and the same area of the center of our brain to both heal pain within our self and to heal pain in the outside World.

This central area of our brain together with the healing power of a smile has been used by spiritual masters for millennia as an object of contemplation and has created manifested the smiling eyes that are so well known in spiritual masters, and this central area in the brain has been named the cave of Brahma in Hinduism and the Crystal Palace in Taoism.

The fact that this contemplation is particularly easy to carry out, while at the same time it is extremely pleasant, very soon made it one of the most preferred Eleventh Step contemplation-meditations for many of us.

1. Sit comfortably with your spine in an upright position and your head straight in a way that allow the muscles of your neck and throat to feel relaxed.
2. Take a couple of deep, slow breaths, noticing how your abdomen rises and fall.
3. Rest the tip of your tongue gently on the roof of your mouth, somewhere behind, and close to, your upper front teeth.
4. Smile gently, allowing your lips to feel full and smooth as they spread to the side and lift just slightly. This smile should be kind of like the Mona Lisa smile, or how we might smile - mostly to our self - if we had just gotten a joke that someone told us several days ago.
5. Now bring your attention to the space between your eyebrows. As you rest your attention there, energy will begin to gather, and as energy pools there, let your attention drift deeper into that pool - back and toward the center of your head.
6. Let your attention rest now right in the center of your brain. Feel the energy gathering in this powerful place.
7. Allow this energy gathering to flow forward into your eyes. Feel your eyes becoming "smiling eyes."
8. To enhance this, you can imagine that you're gazing into the eyes of the person who you love the most, and they're gazing back at you in the same way infusing your eyes with this quality of loving-kindness and delight.
9. Now, direct the energy of your smiling eyes into some place in your body that would like some of this healing energy or to some area in your emotions or your thoughts that would like some of this healing energy, but decide in advance if you want to address a sore spot in your body or you emotions or your thoughts today and focus accordingly.

10. Let the painful spot absorb the smile energy like a sponge absorbs water. . It might be a place where you've recently had an injury or illness. It might be a place that just feels a little numb or "sleepy," or simply some place you've not recently taken care of. In any case, smile down into that place within your body, your emotions or your thoughts, and observe how that place, that emotion or thought opens up to receive the smile-energy.
11. When the place is saturated, direct your inner gaze with its smile-energy into your solar plexus center, feeling that warmth and brightness is gathering there now just below your breast bone.
12. Release the tip of the tongue from the roof of your mouth and release the smile or keep it.
13. If you wish, you can - in the course of your day - choose to look at life around you with your smiling eyes and your smiling lips and thereby transfer the healing energy of your smiling eyes and your smiling lips to your surroundings, especially if you see a human being or an animal suffering from stress or other painful conditions.

STEP TWELVE

**HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AS A RESULT OF
THESE STEPS, WE PRACTICED THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL
OUR AFFAIRS AND
CARRIED ACADAN'S MESSAGE TO OTHERS SUFFERING
FROM ADDICTION TO CHRONIC DISSATISFACTION.**

When we reached Step Twelve, we had achieved a spiritual awakening by reaching a state of mercy towards those who still suffer, and we considered how we could pass on the message to other people who suffer from addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, that it is in fact possible to achieve a state of contentment with our limitation, ignorance, powerlessness and mortality.

When we went to meetings in Active Addictions Anonymous, we shared our experiences with the AcAdAn Program with other members, and in this way, we passed on the message.

When we took on a commitment as Sponsor, we found yet another way of passing on this message.

If somebody outside the Fellowship expressed a desire to know what we were up to, we readily shared about our experiences with the AcAdAn Program, and thereby, we passed on the message of AcAdAn to them.

The Twelfth Step suggests that we practice these principles in all our affairs, and when we did that, our way of being clearly reflected the rewards of working the AcAdAn Program in everything we did, and thus we carried the message by living it even when we were not passing it on to others by word of mouth.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE STEPS

1) The principle of Step One is Honesty.

Slogan: *Truth always triumphs in the end!*

2) The principle of Step Two is Open-mindedness.

Slogan: *To listen attentively and respectfully to another is the first expression of emotional sobriety.*

3) The principle of Step Three is Surrender.

Slogan: *Follow your heart.*

4) The principle of Step Four is Courage.

Slogan: *I accept both my virtues and my defects of character.*

The first four Steps put together also represent the first meeting with the Big Ring of Joy that consists of Faith, Hope, Love and Truth.

5) The principle of Step Five is Humility.

Slogan: *I'm neither more nor less than any other creature manifestation.*

6) The principle of Step Six is Transformation.

Slogan: *I own my hurts.*

7) The principle of Step Seven is Letting Go.

Slogan: *Let go and let God.*

8) The principle of Step Eight is Forgiveness.

Slogan: *Forgive my mistakes and give me the capacity to forgive those who mistake me.*

Steps Five to Eight put together represent the second meeting with the Big Ring of Joy.

9) The principle of Step Nine is Liberation.

Slogan: *The right action is the sweet fruit itself.*

10) The principle of Step Ten is Willingness.

Slogan: *Guide me through my desires and liberate me from my mistakes.*

11) The principle of Step Eleven is Expansion of Consciousness.

Slogan: *God, Your will be done.*

12) The principle of Step Twelve is Mercy.

Slogan: *We do not ask how your addiction to chronic dissatisfaction arose but what you want to do about it and how we can help.*

The last four Steps put together represent the third meeting with the Big Ring of Joy.

DID I THANK MY HIGHER POWER AND EVERYBODY ELSE FOR THE HELP AND GUIDANCE I RECEIVED IN THE COURSE OF THE DAY IN ALL MY AFFAIRS?

In the AcAdAn Program, we had worked with our humanness and thus with accepting our limitation, ignorance, powerlessness and mortality.

By doing so, we had achieved contentment with our humanness and a spiritual awakening to a state of mercy towards those who were still at war with the Reality of their own humanness and that of others, and who therefore had become addicted to chronic dissatisfaction.

TRADITION ONE

**OUR COMMON WELFARE SHOULD COME FIRST; OUR
PERSONAL RECOVERY DEPENDS ON THE UNITY OF OUR
GROUP, AND THE SURVIVAL OF THE GROUP DEPENDS ON
EACH INDIVIDUAL
MEMBER'S SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE GROUP.**

In the course of our spiritual work in AcAdAn, we discovered that self-sufficiency is an illusion.

We need everyone and everything around us, and we need to experience a sense of Fellowship with everyone and everything around us.

In Active Addictions Anonymous, each of us needs a sense of Fellowship with our group.

This we attain, first of all, with the help of our mutual purpose, which is our work with our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, so it can become possible for us to be led to a state of contentment.

We know that it is vital for our group that all its members feel that they belong to the group, for our experiences have shown us that when more and

more members lose their sense of belonging to our group, the group ceases to exist.

Each of us in AcAdAn have our own unique way of understanding and working the Steps, and that is what makes our Fellowship so diverse and interesting.

When we respect each other's diversity and listen attentively to each other, we feel comfortable in each other's company, and benefit more from what others have to share with us.

We need that fountain of mutual wisdom, which is found in our group.

Therefore, we take good care of both newcomers and oldtimers alike in our group.

We also need to make an effort our self to feel that we are a part of our group.

Therefore, we try to come early before the meeting begins and stay back for a while after the meeting ends to develop our feeling of togetherness with our group members.

TRADITION TWO

**FOR OUR GROUP PURPOSE THERE IS BUT ONE ULTIMATE
AUTHORITY, A LOVING HIGHER POWER, AS THAT POWER
COMES TO EXPRESSION THROUGH OUR GROUP
CONSCIENCE. OUR LEADERS ARE TRUSTED SERVANTS;
THEY DO NOT GOVERN.**

The Second Tradition establishes that we have no leaders who govern but only trusted servants.

Some of us are of service to Active Addictions Anonymous as a whole when we help form a new AcAdAn Group, or when we participate in service committees of AcAdAn like Literature Translations Committee, Activities Committee etc.

In our group, the chairperson of the meeting serves us by seeing to it that the meeting is opened on time and is carried through in accordance with the guidelines that the group has agreed upon.

Besides this, the chairperson of the meeting also opens a Group Conscience meeting after the Recovery meeting if a member or members of the group have any suggestions they want to propose or if they want to address concerns that affect the group as a whole, and the group takes a stand on the suggestions or issues raised.

Our treasurer serves us by passing the kitty bag around during our meetings to collect the members' contributions and by paying our rent and refreshments expenses from the money that comes in.

Besides this, the treasurer also sees to it that AcAdAn literature is available at our meetings for members interested in these, and oversees celebrations of our recovery milestones at our meetings.

Our Greeter serves us by ensuring that the refreshments are arranged and served at our meetings besides welcoming all members who walk in.

Each of us serves the group by being part of our meetings.

We know that each and every group member is vital for the group to survive.

When we participate regularly in the meetings, we are part of that Power that keeps the group alive.

Therefore, we have chosen to celebrate members' various periods of involvement with our meetings as recovery milestones; we call these milestones 'x Days, Months or Years of Active Recovery in AcAdAn'.

When we address an issue or suggestion at our Group Conscience meetings, each of us take our turn to express our individual conscience regarding the issue that is being discussed, and we listen attentively to what each of the group members have to contribute until all, who want to express something about this issue have spoken.

Each member has one voice, which they can contribute when their turn comes, and that means, we proceed to take a collective conscience on the issue through a written vote when everybody has spoken once, even if some of us might feel that if we were allowed to speak more than once, we would have a better chance of explaining and convincing others that what we suggested could be the right action to follow for our group.

We have chosen to trust that our will and our life is governed by our Higher Power, and in the same way, we choose to trust that our group's will and life is governed by the Higher Power of the group that comes to expression through our Group Conscience.

So, we let go after having expressed what we want for the group, trusting that the outcome is the best for the group here and now, also if our own wish for a specific outcome is not in conformity with what the group chooses as a solution.

We also choose to trust it is important that our voice is heard, thus contributing towards creating manifesting that foundation which makes it possible for our Group Conscience to reach a well-informed and balanced decision; so it is vital for the group that we speak our minds whether the eventual outcome turns out in conformity with our individual perspective or not.

Sometimes, it may be so that the group decides to make use of our suggestion as the foundation for action at a later point.

We do not try to figure out what caused this change but we trust that our Group Conscience, both then and now, has reached exactly that solution which was best for that particular moment in time.

TRADITION THREE

**THE ONLY REQUIREMENT FOR MEMBERSHIP IN ACTIVE
ADDICTIONS ANONYMOUS IS A DESIRE TO STOP USING
DISSATISFACTION.**

In Tradition Three, we open up both as individuals and as a group to the fact that we cannot judge other people's lives and motives by looking at them from the outside.

We are honest when we admit that we can never know if another person has a desire to give up his/her addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with self, others and life.

It is up to each one of us to ascertain for our self, with the help of the Program, our Sponsor and our Higher Power, if we have a desire to give up our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with our self, and thereby with others and our lives.

Therefore, we welcome anyone who expresses a desire to give up his/her chronic dissatisfaction.

If a person changes his/her mind and leaves the group to return later, we welcome him/her as many times as he/she has reached this desire yet another time.

TRADITION FOUR

EACH ACADAN GROUP IS AUTONOMOUS EXCEPT IN MATTERS AFFECTING OTHER GROUPS OR ACADAN AS A WHOLE; SIMILARLY, EACH MEMBER OF THE GROUP HAS THE RIGHT TO BE AUTONOMOUS EXCEPT IN MATTERS AFFECTING THE GROUP OR ACADAN AS A WHOLE.

An Active Addictions Anonymous group is a group that follows the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions of Active Addictions Anonymous.

Within this frame, each group is autonomous as to how it wants to set up its meetings, welcome newcomers, have varying topics at the meeting, conduct Step meetings, Tradition meetings and so on.

We have the freedom to do this as long as it doesn't affect other groups or Active Addictions Anonymous as a whole.

Similarly, each of us are free to be AcAdAn members in whichever way we each feel is best for us, as long as we do so within the suggested guidelines of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of AcAdAn.

We have the freedom to do this as long as it doesn't affect our group, other groups or Active Addictions Anonymous as a whole.

TRADITION FIVE

EACH GROUP HAS BUT ONE PRIMARY PURPOSE - TO CARRY THE MESSAGE OF RECOVERY TO OTHERS SUFFERING FROM CHRONIC DISSATISFACTION.

The main purpose of each individual in Active Addictions Anonymous is to find and live in contentment through abstaining from using dissatisfaction with self, others and our life.

At AcAdAn meetings, each member shares how far he or she has come in this work with the help of the AcAdAn Program.

This way, the group as a whole passes on the message that it is possible to live in contentment by letting go of our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with self, others and our life.

As a group, we possess vital collective experiences and wisdom about recovery from our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, and we consider it to be the group's primary purpose to make this wealth of knowledge available to our self and others.

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As a group, we possess vital collective experiences and wisdom about recovery from our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction, and we consider it to be the group's primary purpose to make this wealth of knowledge available to our self and others.

TRADITION SIX

**AN ACADAN GROUP OUGHT NEVER ENDORSE, FINANCE OR
LEND THE ACADAN NAME TO ANY RELATED FACILITY OR
OUTSIDE ENTERPRISE, LEST PROBLEMS OF MONEY,
PROPERTY, POWER AND PRESTIGE DIVERT US FROM OUR
PRIMARY PURPOSE.**

An AcAdAn Group's fundamental purpose is of a spiritual nature, and the moment we begin to be preoccupied with money, property, power and prestige issues, we are diverted from our primary purpose.

Therefore, we don't use AcAdAn resources to endorse, finance or lend the AcAdAn name to any related facility or outside enterprise, because such an affiliation of Active Addictions Anonymous with other facilities having a purpose similar to ours may easily createmanifest a situation where power, prestige, and debates over money and ownership might divert us from our primary purpose.

TRADITION SEVEN

EVERY ACADAN GROUP OUGHT TO BE FULLY SELF-SUPPORTING, DECLINING OUTSIDE CONTRIBUTIONS.

Any AcAdAn Group's purpose is the same, and it is essential for us that we don't tie our self to any other purpose.

If we received financial or other contributions like lectures or literature from related facilities, our work with our message and our self would soon get out of course.

At the founding time of Active Addictions Anonymous, our literature consisted of *four* books: *Active Addictions Anonymous – The Wild Life*, *Two Sponsors' Suggestions for Working the Program of Active Addictions Anonymous – The Wild Life*, *Daily contemplations for members of Active Addictions Anonymous – The Wild Life* and *Six Step Analyses for members of Active Addictions Anonymous – The Wild Life*.

Active Addictions Anonymous – The Wild Life contains members' collective experiences with the Steps and Traditions of Active Addictions Anonymous.

Two Sponsors' Suggestions for Working the Program of Active Addictions Anonymous – The Wild Life describes how we can work with the Program of Active Addictions Anonymous, but we have the freedom to choose to work the Program in any other way as long as it works for us.

Daily contemplations for members of Active Addictions Anonymous – The Wild Life consists of quotes from our Program with commentaries that can be used to contemplate various aspects of our Program.

And Six Step Analyses for members of Active Addictions Anonymous – The Wild Life is a compilation of Six Step analysis with the Rings of Pain and Joy as the basis.

Active Addictions Anonymous is a non-profit Fellowship, and hence, we pass on our literature to anyone who wants to read it by making it available for free.

This can be done by lending out our books, allowing free copying of the same, and by providing access to our literature on the Internet under the heading Active Addictions Anonymous and allowing anybody to download it for free.

Even when no strings seem to be attached to contributions coming from outside, we decline them, because we have discovered that the price we might have to pay in indirect and unforeseen ways may give rise to disagreement and conflict.

There are no restrictions for us as individuals to participate in other enterprises of a related nature, but an Active Addictions Anonymous Group strives to keep everything simple by maintaining that which is characteristic for an AcAdAn Group in its place and our other activities of a similar nature in their place.

Therefore, we decline outside contributions, and that means, we are financially self-supporting.

We let the kitty bag go around at our AcAdAn meetings and each of us contributes towards the rent of the room, the coffee or other refreshments and for meeting other group expenses according to our desire and capacity.

Sometimes, we want to give a little more than needed for the group, but we are careful in not overdoing our contribution, because we are a Fellowship and we avoid the idea that one person or a few should give a lot more than their fair share.

If we feel like it, we can pass on our group surplus to our Area Service Committee, helping out with funds for our other collective services like meeting lists, convention etc.

If our Area Service Committee have a surplus in their till, they can pass it on to the World Service Office to cover their expenses for printing our books and other materials with the purpose of passing on the message of Active Addictions Anonymous.

TRADITION EIGHT

**ACTIVE ADDICTIONS ANONYMOUS SHOULD REMAIN
FOREVER
NON-PROFESSIONAL, BUT OUR SERVICE CENTERS MAY
EMPLOY SPECIAL WORKERS.**

The Essential point in this Tradition is that we help each other as equal men and women in our efforts to achieve contentment, and therefore, our profession or status in society has no relevance in AcAdAn.

By not looking at our profession or status, we secure that we remain non-professional when we are at service in AcAdAn.

In AcAdAn, we neither employ any professionals such as doctors, psychiatrists, counselors and therapists, nor do we run facilities like treatment centers, hospitals, clubhouses and halfway homes.

However, this doesn't mean that we cannot employ special workers with specific skills, for example to print and produce our literature and amulets and other types of work that the members are not able to do themselves.

This way, we maintain a clear distinction between professionals and special workers, and thus we follow Tradition Eight in the course of our service in AcAdAn.

TRADITION NINE

**ACADAN AS SUCH OUGHT NEVER BE ORGANIZED, BUT WE
MAY CREATEMANIFEST SERVICE BOARDS OR COMMITTEES
DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE TO THOSE THEY SERVE**

Our Steps and Traditions are organized in a specific sequence and order, and when we say that AcAdAn should never be organized, we mean that it should never be organized in such a way that it gives individuals control over Active Addictions Anonymous, and thereby enable them to govern AcAdAn in a specific direction.

Active Addictions Anonymous is a Fellowship, which is governed by our Group Conscience, and the Group Conscience comes to expression, when each individual member's voice is heard and taken into consideration before the group makes a decision.

Tradition Nine opens up the possibility that we may createmanifest service boards and committees if we want to take on a bigger project like writing new literature or organizing an event or a convention, but those who take on this service are directly responsible to those they serve – the members, groups and the Fellowship of AcAdAn as a whole.

TRADITION TEN

ACTIVE ADDICTIONS ANONYMOUS HAS NO OPINION ON OUTSIDE ISSUES; HENCE THE ACADAN NAME OUGHT NEVER BE DRAWN INTO PUBLIC CONTROVERSY

We know that no single person can speak for the group or for Active Addictions Anonymous as a whole in public discussions, and therefore, we do not speak on behalf of the group or on behalf of Active Addictions Anonymous as a whole.

We leave no doubt that it is our personal opinion that we express, and not necessarily that of AcAdAn as such.

Thereby, we maintain our Tenth Tradition.

When we interact with the outside world – both with the public as well as while carrying the message to others who suffer from addiction to chronic dissatisfaction – in the course of our AcAdAn services, we practice Tradition Ten by not expressing anything about outside issues such as religion, therapeutic communities, politics, treatment methodologies etc.

We refrain from either endorsing or opposing issues and causes outside of AcAdAn.

We carry our AcAdAn message best when we simply share about our recovery, express our experiences from our work with the AcAdAn Program and how the Program has helped us, because thereby, we give others hope that they too can achieve contentment; and also, this way, they get the strength to begin their journey of recovery towards contentment with self, others and their life.

TRADITION ELEVEN

OUR PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY IS BASED ON ATTRACTION RATHER THAN PROMOTION; WE NEED ALWAYS MAINTAIN PERSONAL ANONYMITY AT THE LEVEL OF INTERNET, PRESS, RADIO, TV AND FILMS.

When we talk about Active Addictions Anonymous in context with public relations, we don't promote AcAdAn.

We have faith that the Program will be attractive to those, who seek the same as us.

Even if we readily tell about our membership of Active Addictions Anonymous when others express a desire to hear about it, we don't present our perceptions of the Program as the viewpoints that apply to Active Addictions Anonymous as a whole, and neither do we try to overwhelm others with our perceptions or act as if we are vouching for AcAdAn.

When we appear in the media, whether this be internet, press, radio, TV or films, to share about the message of AcAdAn, we maintain personal anonymity in the same way.

Thus, we protect AcAdAn from the adverse effect that a possible relapse or any other failing in society on our part would have on AcAdAn as a whole.

Since this Tradition is about the context of our public efforts, one way we can practice the principle of Tradition Eleven is by making sure we pass on the message of AcAdAn in public contexts and not our personal perception of the Program.

TRADITION TWELVE

ANONYMITY IS THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION OF ALL OUR TRADITIONS, EVER REMINDING US TO PLACE PRINCIPLES BEFORE PERSONALITIES.

It is important to us that we can freely express our self in our group, but this is only possible when we have confidence in that what we disclose would not be spoken about or discussed with others after the meeting.

Therefore, we neither discuss nor comment on what was shared in the meeting and by whom.

Sometimes, we feel a need to pass on something we heard at the meeting that may help another, and we can do this by not putting a name on the person, who expressed that pearl of wisdom we want to pass on.

We express our opinion about the principles, both inside and outside the group, but we don't try to overwhelm or overpower others with our understanding.

We allow others to take the principles to heart at the pace they want, because we know that the Program will only work for those, who want to take it to heart.

We admit that it is our personal point of view we express when we speak about the principles, and at the same time, we are aware that others do the same.

In this way, we don't take offence when someone expresses the principles in a way we cannot relate to.

We listen to the message instead of our personal opinion of the messenger, and in this way, we maintain the anonymity by placing the principles before the persons involved.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE TRADITIONS

1) The principle of Tradition One is Fellowship.

Slogan: *Together, we can accomplish what we cannot accomplish alone.*

2) The principle of Tradition Two is Service.

Slogan: *I do not serve to elevate myself but to give life-force to the principles I wish to further.*

3) The principle of Tradition Three is Tolerance.

Slogan: *Tolerance furthers understanding.*

4) The principle of Tradition Four is Serenity.

Slogan: *To meet and to separate and to meet again is the life condition of all creaturesmanifestations.*

5) The principle of Tradition Five is Gratitude.

Slogan: *Mutual appreciation pleases the heart.*

6) The principle of Tradition Six is Life-force.

Slogan: *I liberate myself from that which does not serve my purposes.*

7) The principle of Tradition Seven is Simplicity.

Slogan: *A place for everything and everything in its place.*

8) The principle of Tradition Eight is Respect.

Slogan: *Live and let live.*

9) The principle of Tradition Nine is Accountability.

Slogan: *I serve with pleasure or not at all.*

10) The principle of Tradition Ten is Anonymity.

Slogan: *I speak for myself about myself.*

11) The principle of Tradition Eleven is Truth.

Slogan: *My truth is not the whole truth.*

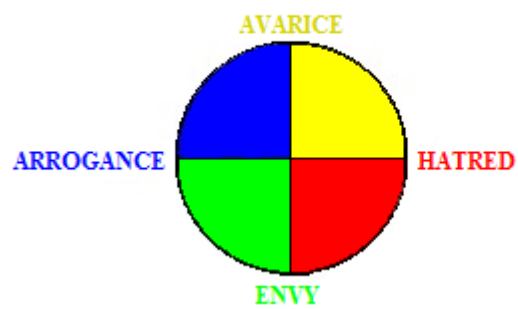
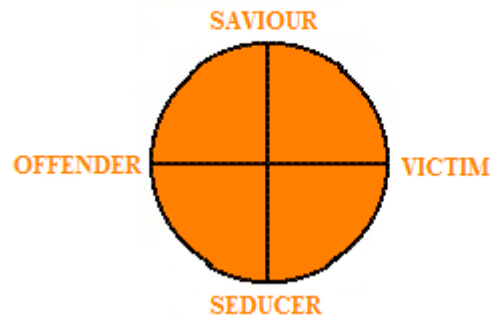
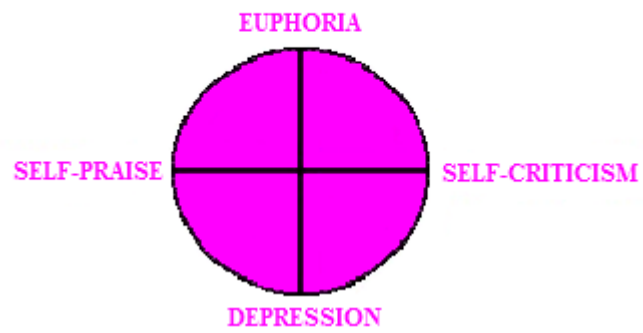
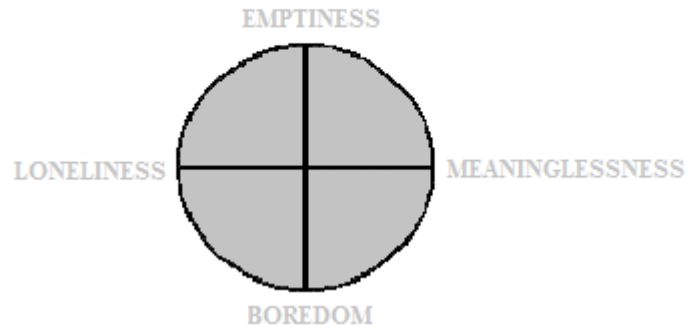
12) The principle of Tradition Twelve is Freedom.

Slogan: *I take to heart what I can use and leave the rest.*

HOW DID I SHOW CONFIDENCE IN THAT FREEDOM FROM FREEDOM
IS MY TRUE FREEDOM?

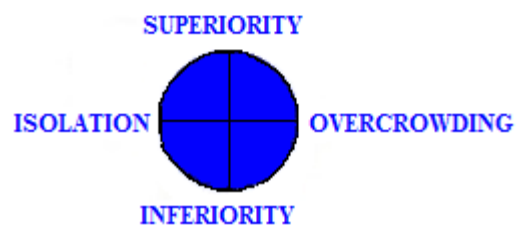
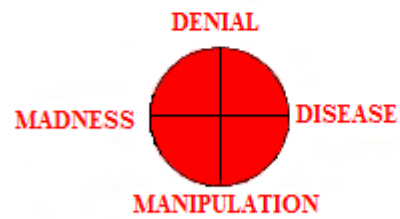
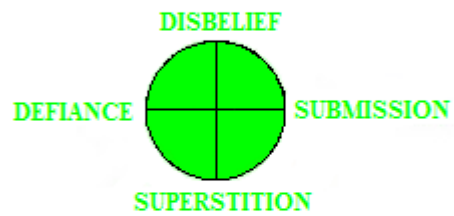
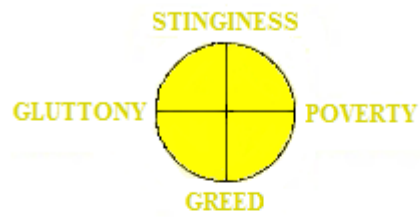
APPENDIX A: THE FOUR BIG RINGS OF PAIN

THE FOUR BIG PAINRINGS



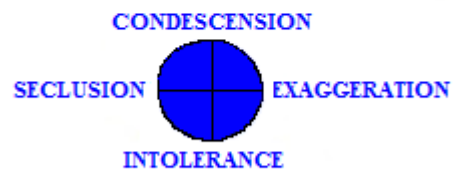
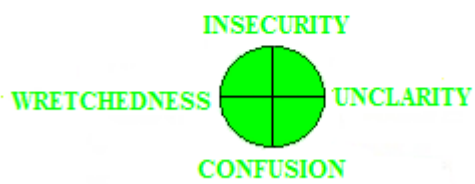
APPENDIX B: THE FOUR SMALL RINGS OF PAIN

THE FOUR SMALL PAIN RINGS



APPENDIX C: THE FOUR MINIRINGS OF PAIN

THE FOUR MINI PAIN RINGS



APPENDIX D: THE FOUR MICRORINGS OF PAIN

THE FOUR MICRO PAIN RINGS



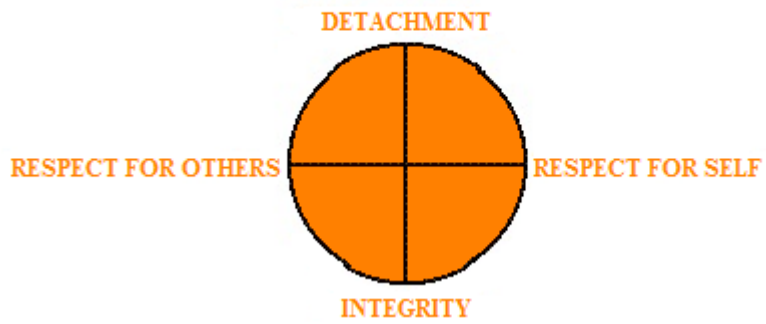
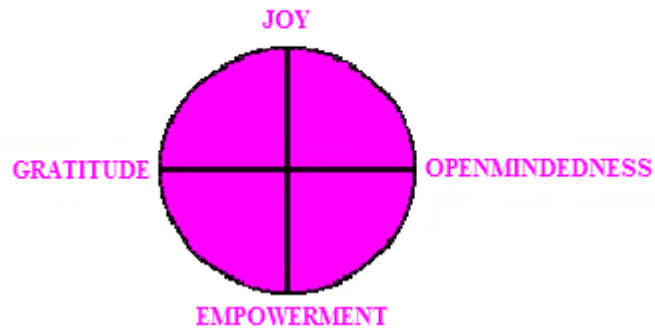
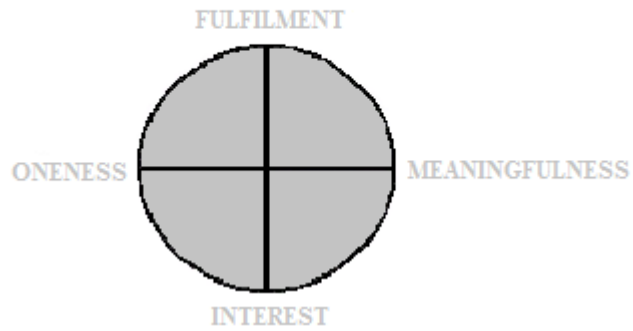
APPENDIX E: THE FOUR NANORINGS OF PAIN

THE FOUR NANO PAIN RINGS



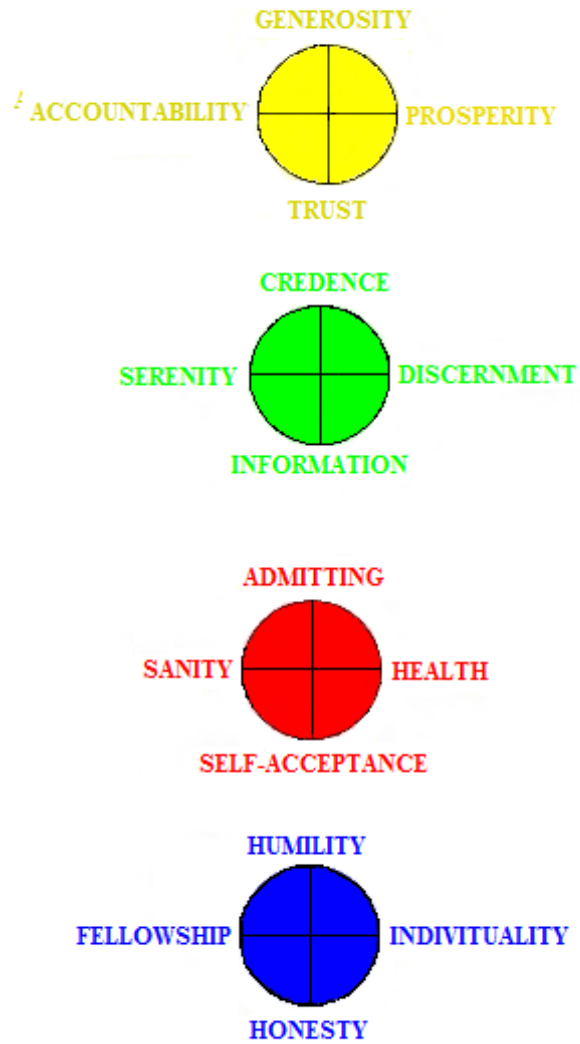
APPENDIX F: THE FOUR BIG RINGS OF JOY

THE FOUR BIG JOYRINGS



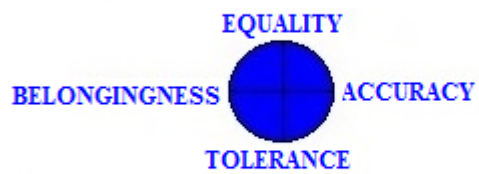
APPENDIX G: THE FOUR SMALL RINGS OF JOY

THE FOUR SMALL JOY RINGS



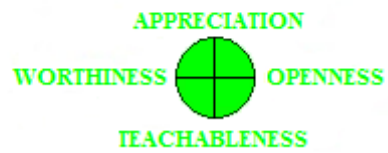
APPENDIX H: THE FOUR MINIRINGS OF JOY

THE FOUR MINI JOY RINGS



APPENDIX I: THE FOUR MICRORINGS OF JOY

THE FOUR MICRO JOY RINGS



APPENDIX J: THE FOUR NANORINGS OF JOY

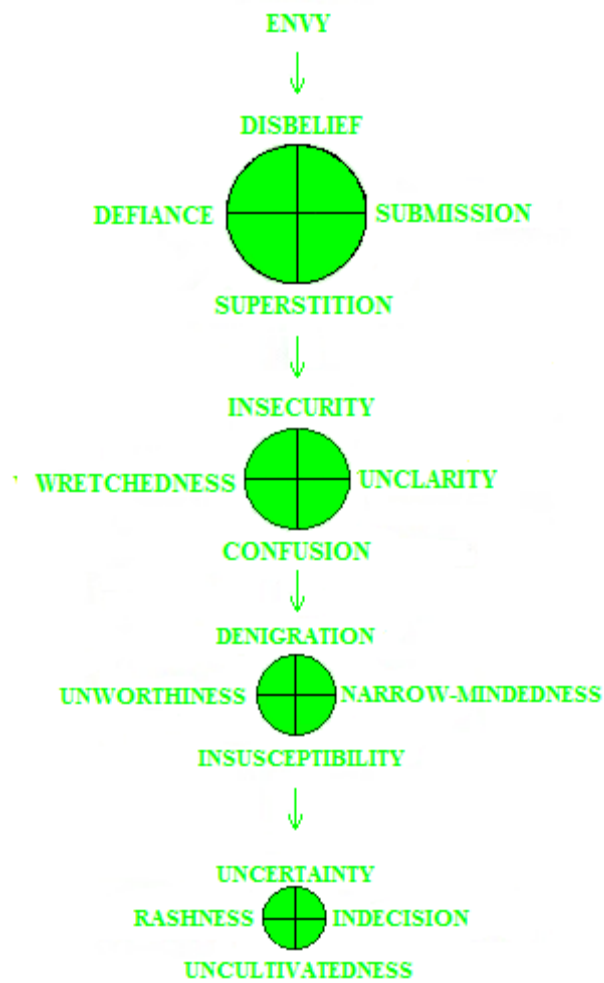
THE FOUR NANO JOY RINGS



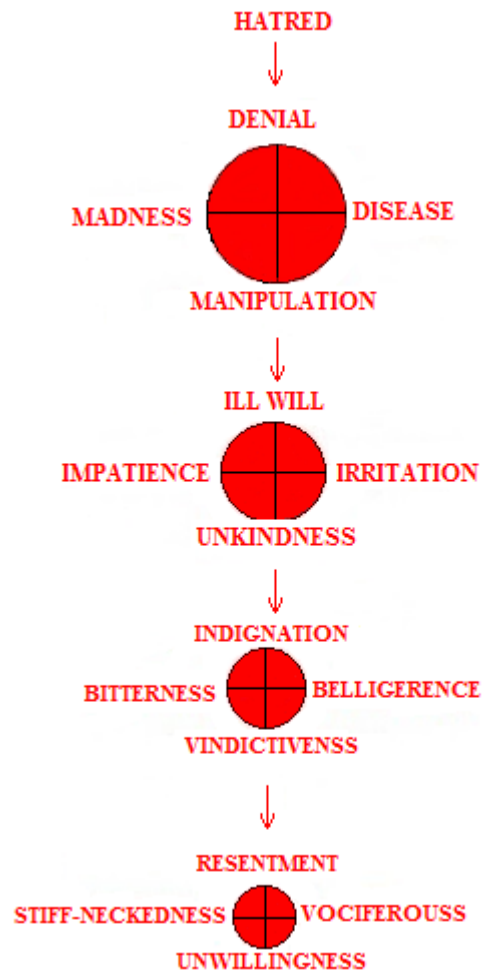
APPENDIX K: THE SMALL, MINI, MICRO AND NANORING OF AVARICE



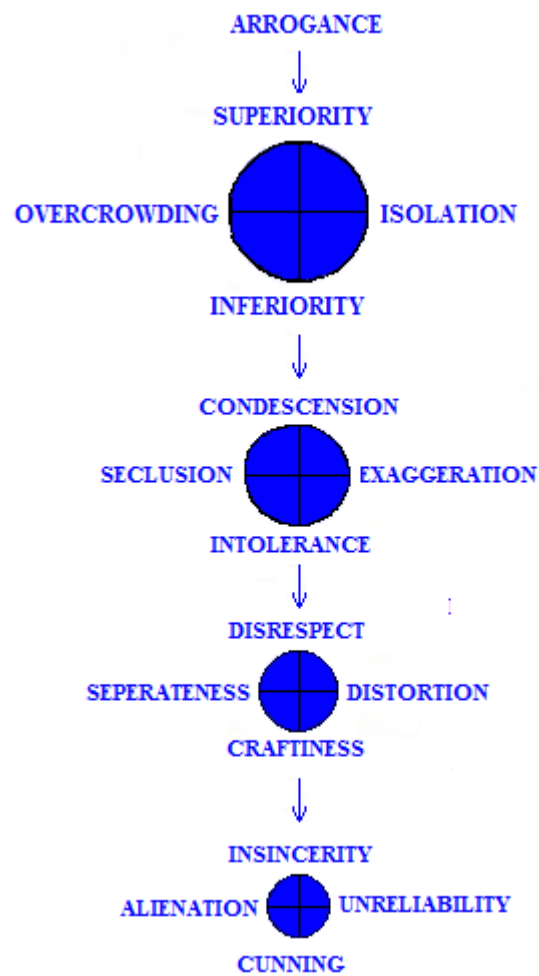
**APPENDIX L:
THE SMALL, MINI, MICRO AND NANORING OF ENVY**



**APPENDIX M:
THE SMALL, MINI, MICRO AND NANORING OF HATRED**



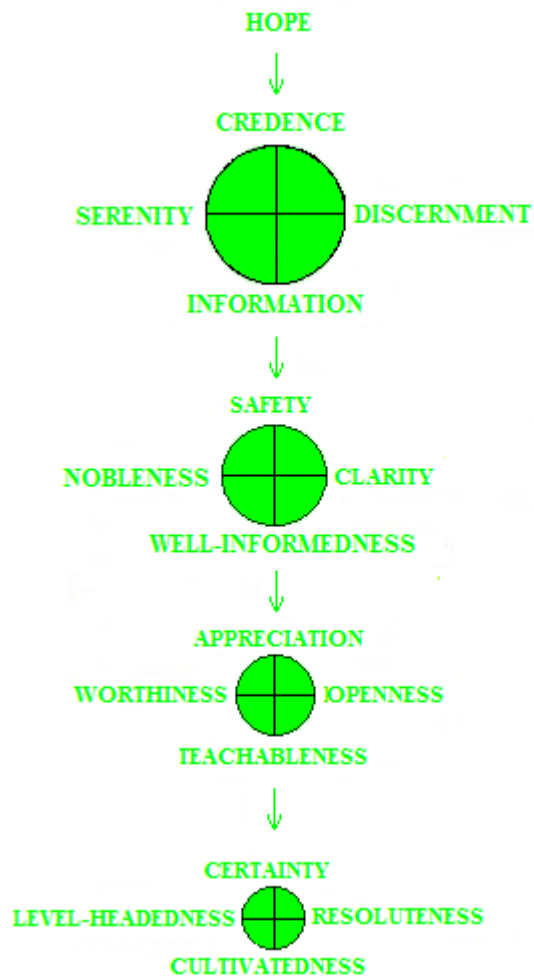
APPENDIX N: THE SMALL, MINI, MICRO AND NANORING OF ARROGANCE



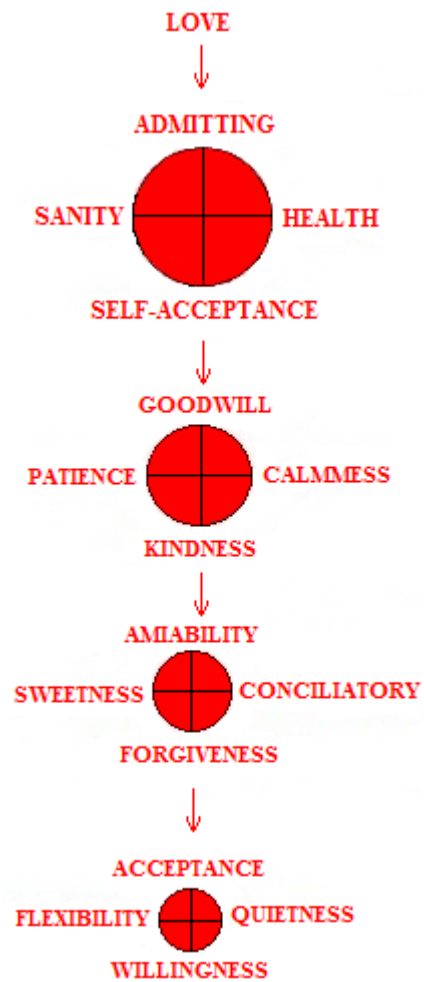
**APPENDIX O:
THE SMALL, MINI, MICRO AND NANORING OF FAITH**



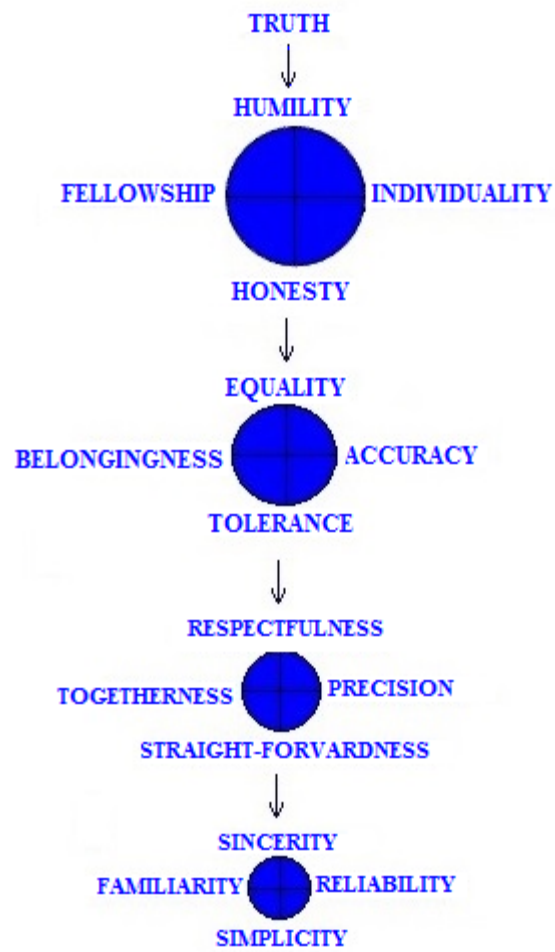
**APPENDIX P:
THE SMALL, MINI, MICRO AND NANORING OF HOPE**



APPENDIX Q
THE SMALL MINI, MICRO AND NANORING OF LOVE



APPENDIX R
THE SMALL, MINI, MICRO AND NANORING OF TRUTH



SAMPLE ACADAN MEETING FORMAT

We suggest the following meeting format for Active Addictions Anonymous Meetings:

The chair says:

My name is ____ and I am an active addict.

Welcome to this meeting in Active Addictions Anonymous.

We meet every Tuesday from 1:30 to 2:30.

The meeting room will be open 15 minutes before and after the meeting.

We are a Fellowship of men and women, who meet regularly to help each other liberate our self from the unmanageability that springs from our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction with our human limitation, ignorance, powerlessness and mortality/changeability and thereby become able to live a life of contentment.

Let us begin this meeting with a moment of silence to reflect on why we are here now, followed by the God's Prayer that our group has chosen from Step Eleven in our literature.

After a moment of silence, say:

Thank you and now let us pray our chosen prayer together:

God,

You are the only true goal of our lives
We are yet but slaves of our wishes
putting bar to our advancement
but You are the only God and Power
who can take us up to that stage.

Thank you!

After the Prayer, the meeting begins formally with the Chairperson saying:

The only prerequisite for membership of Active Addictions Anonymous is a desire to liberate oneself from one's addiction to chronic dissatisfaction and thereby become able to live a life of contentment.

It does not cost anything to be a member of the Fellowship.

You are a member if you say you are.

We suggest that you come some time before the beginning of the meeting and stay back for some time after the end of the meeting to develop your feeling of fellowship with the other members of Active Addictions Anonymous.

I now pass on the word to our treasurer, who will welcome our newcomers and celebrate milestones with our old-timers.

Thank you!

The treasurer says:

My name is _____ and I am an active addict.

In Active Addictions Anonymous, we believe that anybody, who comes to our meetings, is a part of that Power, which keeps our group alive, and therefore we celebrate the various active periods of members' participation in our meetings in Active Addictions Anonymous.

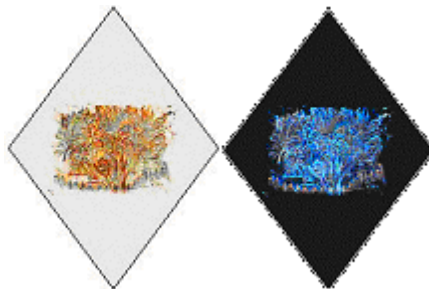
To begin with, we celebrate the most important person among us today, who are our newcomers.

Is anybody, who wishes to introduce himself/herself by name, attending his/her first meeting in Active Addictions Anonymous today?

Kindly allow us to welcome you.

Welcome the newcomer by giving him/her the Active Addictions Anonymous Welcome Amulet after it has been sent around to all members to give them the opportunity to charge it with their blessings and good wishes for the future of the newcomer.

FRONT SIDE AND BACK SIDE OF THE WELCOME AMULET OF ACTIVE ADDICTIONS ANONYMOUS



We will now move on to celebrate the meeting participation of members of Active Addictions Anonymous.

Has anybody participated in between 2 and 29 meetings in Active Addictions Anonymous today?

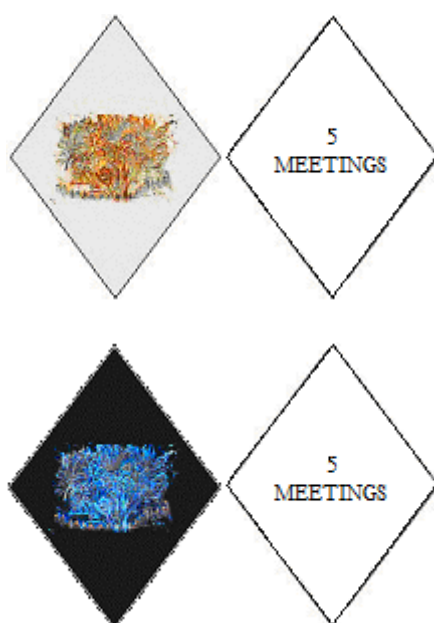
Has anybody participated in 30 Active Addictions Anonymous meetings today?

Has anybody participated in 60 Active Addictions Anonymous meetings today?

90 meetings? 180 meetings? 270 meetings? 365 meetings? More meetings?

If a member wants to celebrate his/her meeting attendance, give him/her that Active Addictions Anonymous Amulet, which has the number of his/her meetings on one side and the Active Addictions Anonymous symbol on the other side, after the member has chosen between the day-time or the night-time of the AcAdAn symbol for his/her amulet, and after the amulet has been sent around to all members to give them the opportunity to charge it with their blessings and good wishes for the future of the member.

**FRONT SIDE AND BACK SIDE OF THE MILESTONE
MEETING AMULET OF ACTIVE ADDICTIONS ANONYMOUS**

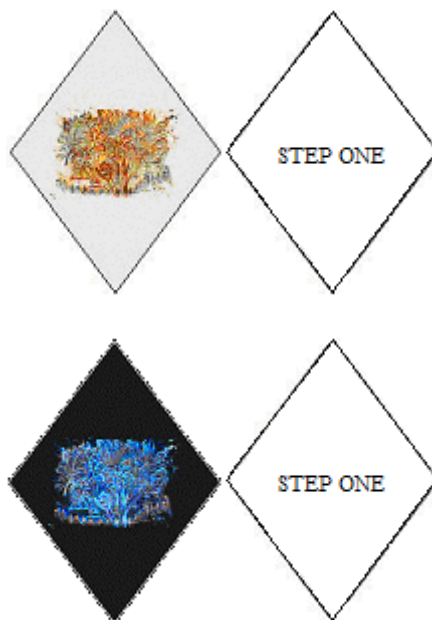


Move on to the next part of the celebrations by asking:

Does anybody want to celebrate the completion of a Step in Active Addictions Anonymous by sharing his/her experiences with that Step in our meeting today after the group readings?

If a member wants to celebrate his/her completion of a Step with the Fellowship, give him/her that Active Addictions Anonymous amulet, which has the name of the Step on one side and the Active Addictions Anonymous symbol on the other side, after the member has chosen between the day-time or the night-time of the AcAdAn symbol for his/her amulet, and after the amulet has been sent around to all members to give them the opportunity to charge it with their blessings and good wishes for the future of the member.

**FRONT SIDE AND BACK SIDE OF THE MILESTONE
STEP AMULET OF ACTIVE ADDICTIONS ANONYMOUS**



End the celebrations by saying:

Thank you for celebrating your Recovery Milestones with us.

I will now pass the word back to our chair, _____.

Thank you!

The Chairperson says:

My name is _____, and I am an active addict.

Now, let us proceed with our group readings.

Select members to read one or more of the group readings and request them to read it for the group by saying:

I request (*member's name*) to read (*name of the reading*) for us.

The group readings can be read in the following order:

What is Active Addictions Anonymous?

Why are we here?

Who has the disease of active addiction?

The program of Active Addictions Anonymous

What Can I do?

Easy Does It!

After the group readings the chair says:

Now, I ask those members, who have completed the work with a Step in Active Addictions Anonymous to come up here and share their experiences with their work with that Step with the Fellowship.

After they are done sharing, say:

Now, I open the floor for members, who want to share and pass the word around the room.

Those, who would prefer to listen today, can introduce themselves, express that they want to listen today and pass on the word to the next member.

At the end of this part of the meeting, the chairperson ends the meeting by saying:

I now end this meeting with our closing readings.

Select members to read one or more of the group readings and request them to read it aloud for the group by saying:

I request (*member's name*) to read (*name of the reading*) for us.

The group readings can be read in the following order:

The Twelve Traditions of Active Addictions Anonymous.

Just For Today

After the readings, the chair of the meeting reads the AcAdAn Announcements if any, and add:

If a member wants to open a new meeting in AcAdAn, we suggest that he/she follow the suggestion for meeting format, which can be found in the end of our basic book: *Active Addictions Anonymous – The Wild Life*.

All members can find our literature for free download on the Internet on this address:

<http://www.acadan.org/>

In the end the chair end the meeting by saying:

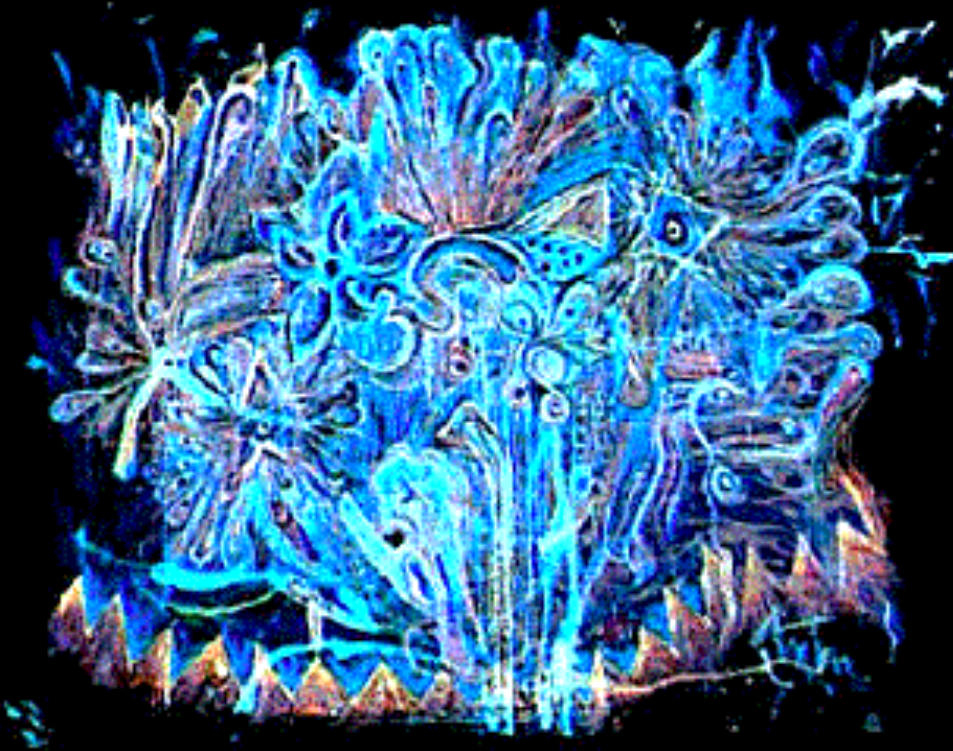
I thank you all for participating this meeting, and for sharing your experience, strength and hope with us about how we can recover from our addiction to chronic dissatisfaction and thereby come to live a content life.

And we end our meeting together with the serenity prayer that our group have chosen from Step Eleven in our literature.

God, grant us the serenity
to accept the things we cannot change,
the courage to change the things we can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Thank you and keep coming back, we need you!

ACTIVE ADDICTION ANONYMOUS



THE WILD LIFE