



# Spirituality

*a roundtable discussion*

hosted by the **Working With Others** group

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Thursday, September 29, 2011

- the Last Thursday in September -

7:30-9pm at Central Services

14 Sunnen Drive, Suite 144, St. Louis

## Speakers & sharing on spirituality in AA

*on topics including:*

- ✓ How is AA spiritual?
- ✓ Spirituality, religion, & AA
- ✓ Belief, faith, & open-mindedness
- ✓ Atheism & agnosticism
- ✓ Personal practices of meditation, etc.
- ✓ How do you talk to sponsees about spirituality
- ✓ Controversy, respect, & the Traditions

*Share your experience!*

*Learn from the experience of others!*

*Consider bringing delicious munchies!*

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"Love & tolerance of others is our code."

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## **Spirituality Discussion Questions**

*Please remember that AA as an organization has no opinion on outside issues, including religion! And please try to be respectful and sensitive to the feelings and beliefs of others! "Love and tolerance of others is our code."*

### **Spirituality & AA**

1. What is the AA program? What's spiritual about the 12 Steps?
2. What's the difference between spirituality and religion? Is AA a religion? Is AA a Christian fellowship in disguise? Why do we care whether AA is perceived as a religion? In what ways do people sometimes make AA look like a religion?
3. Have your religious beliefs and practices changed as a result of AA?
4. What is a spiritual awakening? How do you know if you've had one?
5. Were Steps 2 & 3 difficult for you? How do you help sponsees work those Steps?

### **Controversy & open-mindedness**

1. What's spiritual about the Fellowship? The 12 Traditions? AA service? The 12 Concepts?
2. How good is AA about having no opinion on religion? Does AA welcome people of differing faiths? Have you seen (or been guilty of) religious prejudice, argument, patronizing comments, pressure to conform, efforts to convert someone to a particular faith?
3. To what extent is it okay to quote religious sources or talk about your religious beliefs in AA meetings? With sponsees? Is it okay to talk about religion as long as you are saying something negative about it? Is it okay as long as you start with a disclaimer or say it's just your opinion?
4. Can we share specific techniques for prayer or meditation in meetings? With sponsees? In workshops?

5. What is your group's position on the Lord's prayer? In general, is it okay if a meeting regularly quotes or uses a prayer from (for instance) Buddhism, Christianity, Eckankar, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Native American religion, Paganism, Shamanism, Shinto, Sikhism, Sufism, Tantra, Taoism, Unitarianism, Wicca, Zoroastrianism, etc.? What about meditative practices taken from Transcendental Meditation, Scientology, a local treatment center, or other sources? Is it okay to quote a prophet, a preacher or guru, a psychologist, a philosopher, a celebrity, a personal hero, an ancient myth, a folk tale, a greeting card, a hymn, a pop song, a famous movie, a beautiful poem?

### **Personal practice**

1. How do you practice Step 7? Step 11? How do you practice prayer and meditation?
2. Do you study or practice religion or spirituality outside of AA? If you are religious, does your religious practice benefit your recovery? Is there any conflict between your religion and AA?
3. How do you sponsor an agnostic? An atheist? Someone who practices an unusual faith? Someone who has beliefs you disagree with?
4. How spiritual do we need to be in AA? Do you consider yourself a good example of spirituality in AA?