



Spirituality of the 12 Steps Step 1

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON
RICHARD ROHR'S
BREATHING UNDERWATER

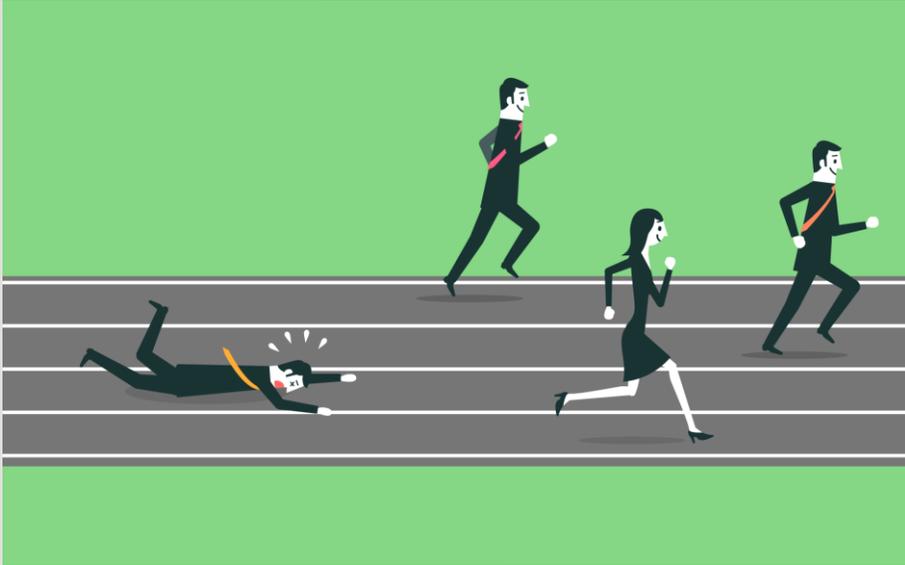


Powerlessness



- We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable. — *Step 1 of the Twelve Steps*
- “Like a weaver, you roll up my life, and cut it from the loom. From dawn to night you are watching my failure. I cry aloud until the morning, but like a lion you crush all my bones. I twitter like a swallow, I moan like a dove.” — *Isaiah 38:12–14*
- “I cannot understand my own behavior. I fail to carry out the very things I want to do, and find myself doing the very things I hate...for although the will to do what is good is in me, the performance is not.” — *Romans 7:15, 18*
- “And when Jesus looked at the crowds, he felt sorry for them, because they were harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd.” — *Matthew 9:36*

God's Greatest Surprise and Constant Disguise



People who fail to do it right,...are those who often break through to enlightenment and compassion.

A mystery...you only know it to be true by going through it and coming out the other side yourself.



People who move...success to seeming success seldom understand success at all,

Ego, Flesh, “self-indulgence”

- It is the imperial ego that has to go, and only powerlessness can do the job correctly.
- If we try to change our ego with the help of our ego, we only have a better-disguised ego!
- “Unless the grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it will yield a rich harvest” (*John 12:24*).



All Mature Spirituality Is About Letting Go

- The first Step is probably the hardest, the most denied, and the most avoided.
- *Letting go is not in anybody's program for happiness, and yet all mature spirituality, in one sense or another, is about letting go and unlearning.* Thomas Merton
- The ego hates change...Instead, we do more and more of what does not work,
- *"We would rather be ruined than changed. We would rather die in our dread than climb the cross of the present and let our illusions die."* W.H Auden



Questions for Discussion

- How do you feel about control and “powerlessness”?
- Rohr writes that learning to draw on God will not happen until you deplete your resources... until you hit bottom...
 - Have you experienced success? Do you think that you understand success?
 - Have you experienced failure? Have you experienced “enlightenment” and/or compassion?
- How do you respond to change? How do you feel about “letting go.”
- If I were drowning I know I would need to be saved, but how am I drowning?

