

Occurrences of the Word “God” and Related Words
on Pages 1-164 of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th Ed.

**Part 4: The 41 Occurrences of Non-Biblical Descriptions of “God”
on pages 1-164 of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, 4th ed.**
(Bolding added for clarity)

On pages 166-67 of the A.A. General Service Conference-approved book *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*, A.A. cofounder Bill W. writes:

We [Fitz, Henry, our grand little secretary Ruth, and myself] were still arguing about the Twelve Steps. All this time I had refused to budge of these steps. I would not change a word of the original draft, in which, you will remember, I had consistently used the word “God,” . . . Who suggested the compromise words I do not know . . . In Step Two **we decided to describe God as** a “Power greater than ourselves.” In Steps Three and Eleven we inserted the words “*God as we understood Him.*” . . . Such were the final concessions to those of little or no faith; this was the great contribution of our atheists and agnostics. . . **God was certainly there in our Steps, but He was now expressed in terms that anybody—anybody at all—could accept and try.** [italics in original; bolding added for emphasis]

“Creative Intelligence”

Three (3) Occurrences

- p. 12: “I could go for such conceptions as **Creative Intelligence**, . . .” **
- p. 46: “As soon as we admitted the possible existence of a **Creative Intelligence**, a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things, we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction, provided we took other simple steps.”
- p. 49: “When, however, the perfectly logical assumption is suggested that underneath the material world and life as we see it, there is an All Powerful, Guiding, **Creative Intelligence**, right there our perverse streak comes to the surface . . .”

“Czar of the Heavens”

One (1) Occurrence

- p. 12: “. . . [B]ut I resisted the thought of a **Czar of the Heavens**, however loving His sway might be.” **

“Director”

One (1) Occurrence

- p. 62: “God was going to be our **Director.**”

“Employer”

One (1) Occurrence

- p. 63: “We had a new **Employer.** Being all powerful, He provided what we

“Friend” One (1) Occurrence

p. 13: “I ruthlessly faced my sins and became willing to have my new-found **Friend** take them away, root and branch. I have not had a drink since.”

“Great Reality” Two (2) Occurrences

p. 55: “We found the **Great Reality** deep down within us.”

p. 161: “They had visioned the **Great Reality**—their loving and All Powerful Creator.”

“Higher Power” Two (2) Occurrences

p. 43: “. . . [N]either he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. His defense must come from a **Higher Power**.”

p. 100: “Follow the dictates of a **Higher Power** and you will presently live in a new and wonderful world, no matter what your present circumstances!”

“Infinite Power and Love” One (1) Occurrence

p. 56: “He stood in the Presence of **Infinite Power and Love**.”

“One” Two (2) Occurrences

p. 59 (1st): “. . . [T]here is **One** who has all power—that One is God.”

p. 59 (2d): “. . . [T]here is One who has all power—that **One** is God.”

“Power” Four (4) Occurrences

p. 45: “But where and how were we to find this **Power**?”

p. 46: “. . . even though it was impossible for any of us to fully define or comprehend that **Power**, which is God.”

p. 50 (1st): “This **Power** has in each case accomplished the miraculous.”

p. 50 (2d): “They flatly declare that since they have come . . . to take a certain attitude toward that **Power**, . . .”

“Power beyond ourselves”: One (1) Occurrence

pp. 46: “We were bothered with the thought that faith and dependence upon a **Power beyond ourselves** was somewhat weak, even cowardly.”

“a Power greater than myself/himself/ourselves/yourself/themselves”: 11 Occurrences

p. 10: “I had always believed in a **Power greater than myself**.”

p. 12: “*It was only a matter of being willing to believe in a Power greater than myself.*” (italics in original) **

**** NOTE:** All five of the non-biblical expressions referring to God on page 12—i.e., “Creative Intelligence,” “Universal Mind,” “Spirit of Nature,” “Czar of the Heavens,” and “a Power greater than myself”--are part of a four-paragraph, handwritten section of text that was inserted into the printer’s copy of *Alcoholics Anonymous* just before the first edition was published on April 10, 1939. The four-paragraph section of text begins with the words “Despite the living example of my friend . . .” on page 12 of the fourth edition (2001) and ends with the words “Of course I would!” on page 12. This four-paragraph section of text was not present in the prepublication copy of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, better known as “the Multilith Edition” or “the Original Manuscript.” [See *The Book That Started It All* (<http://mcaf.ee/omv8x>; accessed 12/17/12), or see the “Original Manuscript” (<http://www.silkworth.net/originalmanuscript/chapter1.html#BILLSSTORY>; accessed 12/17/12), for more details.]

- p. 45 (1st): “We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a ***Power greater than ourselves.*** (italics in original)
- p. 45 (2d): “Well, that’s exactly what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a **Power greater than yourself** which will solve your problem.”
- p. 46: “We found that as soon as we were able to lay aside prejudice and express even a willingness to believe in a **Power greater than ourselves**, we commenced to get results, even though it was impossible for any of us to fully define or comprehend that Power, which is God.”
- p. 47: “We needed to ask ourselves but one short question. ‘Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a **Power greater than myself?**’”
- p. 48: “The reader may still ask why he should believe in a **Power greater than himself.**”
- p. 50 (1st): “Every one of them has gained access to, and believes in, a **Power greater than himself.**”
- p. 50 (2d): “They flatly declare that since they have come to believe in a **Power greater than themselves**, to take a certain attitude toward that Power, and to do certain simple things, there has been a revolutionary change in their way of living and thinking.”
- p. 59: “2. Came to believe a **Power greater than ourselves** could restore us to sanity.”
- p. 93: “*The main thing is that he be willing to believe in a **Power greater than himself** and that he live by spiritual principles.*” (italics in original)

“Power which is greater than himself”: One (1) Occurrence

- p. 50 (1st): “In our personal stories you will find a wide variation in the way each teller approaches and conceives of the **Power which is greater than himself.**”

“Principal” One (1) Occurrence

- p. 62 (2d): “He is the **Principal**; we are His agents.”

“Providence” One (1) Occurrence

p. 101: “To a person who has had experience with an alcoholic, this may seem like tempting **Providence**, but it isn’t.”

“Spirit of Nature” One (1) Occurrence

p. 12: “I could go for such conceptions as . . . **Spirit of Nature** . . .”

“Spirit of the Universe”: Four (4) Occurrences

p. 10: “I simply had to believe in a **Spirit of the Universe**, who knew neither time nor limitation.”

p. 46: “As soon as we admitted the possible existence of a Creative Intelligence, a **Spirit of the Universe** underlying the totality of things, . . .”

p. 52: “When we saw others solve their problems by a simple reliance upon the **Spirit of the Universe**, we had to stop doubting the power of God.”

p. 75: “We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the **Spirit of the Universe**.”

“Supreme Being” Two (2) Occurrences

p. 46 (1st): “How could a **Supreme Being** have anything to do with it all?”

p. 46 (2d): “And who could comprehend a **Supreme Being** anyhow?”

“Universal Mind” One (1) Occurrence

p. 12: “I could go for such conceptions as . . . **Universal Mind** . . .”