

# Bill Wilson's now famous "ILLUSORY PEDESTAL" 10th STEP Perfect example of the spirit of our 10th Step by Bill W in his reply to a 1960 letter mailed to him from a Group in Chicago taking his inventory (Bill was 26 years sober)



[\\_ \(https://12stepstoanewlife.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/wilson-thomsen.jpg\)](https://12stepstoanewlife.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/wilson-thomsen.jpg)

"That you seemed disillusioned with me personally may be a new and painful experience for you but many members have had that experience with me. Most of their pain has been caused not only by my several shortcomings but by their own insistence on placing me, a drunk, trying to get along with other folks, upon a completely illusory pedestal; a station which no fallible person could possibly occupy. I'm sure that you will understand that I have never held myself out to anybody as either a saint or a superman. I have repeatedly and truthfully said that A.A. is full of people who have made more spiritual progress than I ever, or can make. That in some areas of living I have made some decided gains but in others I seem to have stood still. And in still other ways I may have gone backwards. I am sorry that you are disillusioned with me but I am happy that even I have found a life here.

— No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection. — Alcoholics Anonymous, page 60

Don't cast a shadow on anyone unless you're providing shade.

A friend of mine wrote: "Placing some 'on a pedestal' is just the flip-side of the same "judgment" (playing God) coin – it's the side that reads "love' instead of 'hate' – its still playing God. Sending someone to heaven – is just as much playing god as sending them to hell. The problem in this famous incident is not Bills – as we can see from his reply. He certainly had their 'number'. Good for him. The fault was on the members who placed Bill on a pedestal. It is demeaning to do to someone. Whenever we place anyone on a pedestal, we will eventually come to hate them for the reality of their imperfection.

Whenever we place anyone on a pedestal, it is to lift ourselves up to status of "god-maker". Eventually we come to hate them because the illusion of ourselves as 'creator' is so dependent upon their 'goodness', when it is finally revealed they are not 'that' perfect – we resent it. We get knocked off our position of little 'god-maker'.

This is very common in AA (in religions too) – especially when sponsor / sposnee – goes 'sick' with "my sponsor is . . ." honoring sponsorship lineages, ect. (I keep my 'lineage' to myself to avoid this kind of degrading thought.)

It is not at first always the 'idols' fault – it is often needy worshipers who elevated him in the first place. Hero worship always ends this way. In an extreme example, John Lennon was killed by his own 'Uber-Fan.'

Bill was so very observant in his reply. His response was just perfect and he clearly understood this principle. He'd HAVE to learn it . . .or else he'd never survive as "Bill W." He was a very special man.

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