



LESSON SEVEN

STEP SIX AND STEP SEVEN

Step Six: *Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.*

Step Seven: *Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.*

Anyone who is willing and honestly tries this Step has advanced spiritually. Old-timers have proven that this Step works. Watch them and see their inner peace as serenity takes the place of turmoil and conflict.

Just as the obsession for alcohol is lifted, so are our character defects lifted from us. What is promised is more than just not drinking. What is promised is happy and contented sobriety.

Let us look at two words in Step Six: *entirely ready*. We are willing to go to any length in our recovery quest. Few of us can quickly or easily become ready to aim at perfection. How then can we accept the entire implication of Step Six? This Step is a goal toward which we strive. It is a measuring stick by which we can determine our progress. The urgent thing is that we at least make a beginning.

We all have natural drives and instincts. When these drives, instincts, or desires surpass their intended purposes, they then become character defects. When we use them to demand more satisfaction than they are able to deliver, we are left in a disquieting emotional state.

We become successful in attaining a healthy attitude in the trying rather than in the conquest. Step Six is the adoption of an attitude by which we begin a lifetime job of building a better character.

Certain attitudes can be deadly in our quest for recovery. Some of these attitudes are listed at the top of the next page.

- *No Never* To this Step is a closed mind
- *Delay* To this Step is dangerous
- *Rebellion* To this Step is fatal

KEY IDEA 1

The *Spiritual Lift*, the nearness to our Creator that is experienced from humble invocation of His help, and our willingness to be freed from old willful thoughts and habits are essential to successful attainment of these Steps.

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SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

The ability to take risks is a sign of recovery. This involves not only courage but also trust and self-esteem.

KEY IDEA 2

[We experience] a reconciliation to God's way of doing business. We become "fed up" with our way and with further practice of trying to run the show ourselves.

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SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

The imprisonment of *tunnel vision* is broken by the practice of gratitude.

Now we'll look at Step Seven: *Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings*. The important point in this Step is humility. In order to sober up there must be some traumatic event that is so shocking and painful (hitting bottom) that it results in a major deflation of egotism. If at this point the alcoholic chooses humility instead of a restoration of false pride and seeks and finds help, the alcoholic has begun his or her journey in recovery.

It is important not to confuse humility with humiliation. Nor is putting oneself down or not owning up to one's attributes humility. That is, in fact, false pride. Humility means having an honest and true picture of ourselves—the positive as well as the negative. Humility means to be *teachable*—we don't have all the answers and it's not true that only we know what is good for us. Humility is to be open. Wisdom is the ability to perceive alternatives.

This Step places character building and spiritual values first. This becomes the main purpose of our lives.

KEY IDEA 3

Knowledge of our illness, alcoholism, prompts us to turn to God for help. The alcoholic must pray. There is no standard form of prayer to use. Our remorse over past mistakes and a genuine desire to correct them will indicate how we shall pray.

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SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

Spontaneous and creative conversation with our Higher Power produces a more intimate and fruitful relationship.

KEY IDEA 4

We ask for spiritual and physical strength to execute His will.

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SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

The “twenty-four-hour” idea is often difficult for the alcoholic to get a handle on. We know God’s will if we can stay in the moment.

KEY IDEA 5

We ask God’s help; we thank Him for recovery; and we maintain our contented sobriety.

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SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION

Gratitude heightens the senses as well as our awareness.

