

Step Three

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

“There is only one key, and it is called willingness.” Pg. 34

“Like all the remaining Steps, Step Three calls for affirmative action, for it is only by action that we can cut away the self-will which has always blocked the entry of God. . . into our lives.” Pg. 34

“We can have faith, yet keep God out of our lives.” Pg. 34

“In fact, the effectiveness of the whole A.A. program will rest upon how well and earnestly we have tried [Step Three] Pg. 34

“[A] beginning, even the smallest, is all that is needed.” Pg. 35

“Though self-will may slam it shut again, as it frequently does. . . .” Pg. 35

“The trouble is that this kind of thinking takes no real account of the facts. And the facts seem to be these: The more we become willing to depend upon a Higher Power, the more independent we actually are. Therefore dependence, as A.A. practices it, is really a means of gaining true independence of the spirit.” Pg. 36

“[S]tartling to discover how dependent we really are, and how unconscious of that dependence.” Pg. 36

“How persistently we claim the right to decide all by ourselves just what we shall think and just how we shall act.” Pg. 37

“Nobody is going to meddle with our personal independence in such matters.” Pg. 37

“Everywhere he sees people filled with anger and fear, society breaking up into warring fragments.” Pg. 37

“[D]ependence upon an A.A. group or upon a Higher Power. . . .” Pg. 38

“[D]ependence was their chief source of strength.” Pg. 39

“[R]ely upon A.A. for the solution of his alcohol problem.” Pg. 39

“[H]e has more problems than alcohol . . . remorse and guilt . . . [b]itterness . . . financial insecurity . . . and panic . . . “ Pg. 39

“Surely he must now depend upon Somebody or Something else.”Pg. 39

“Nothing short of continuous action upon these [Steps] as a way of life can bring the much-desired result.” Pg. 40

“Then it is explained that other Steps of the A.A. program can be practiced with success only when Step Three is given a determined and persistent trial.” Pg. 40

“But now it appears that there are certain things which only the individual can do . . . develop the quality of willingness . . . [H]e is the only one who can make the decision to exert himself” Pg. 40

“All of the Twelve Steps require sustained and personal exertion to conform to their principles and so, we trust, to God’s will.” Pg. 40

“It is when we try to make our will conform with God’s that we begin to use it rightly.” Pg. 40

“We had tried to bombard our problems with it instead of attempting to bring it into agreement with God’s intention for us. To make this increasingly possible is the purpose of A.A.’s Twelve Steps” Pg. 40

“Once we have come into agreement with these ideas, it is really easy to begin the practice of Step Three.” pp. 40-41

Big Book

“[B]e convinced that any life run on self-will can hardly be a success.” 60

“Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles. Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity . . . ” Pg. 62

“So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making. They arise out of ourselves . . . ” Pg. 62

“Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us!” God makes that possible.” Pg. 62

“[W]e had to have God’s help.” Pg. 62

“First of all, we had to quit playing God. It didn’t work.” Pg. 62

“We decided that hereafter in this drama of life, God was going to be our Director.” Pg. 62

“When we sincerely took such a position, all sorts of remarkable things followed. We had a new Employer.” Pg. 63

“Established on such a footing we became less and less interested in ourselves, our little plans and designs. More and more we became interested in seeing what we could contribute to life.” Pg. 63

“[A]s we became conscious of His presence, we began to lose our fear . . . ” Pg. 63

“We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at least abandon ourselves utterly to Him.” Pg. 63