

SESSION 7

STEP 3 How it Works pp. 58 - 64

Step 3 Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.

The keystone of the new and triumphant arch. (62: 3) A beginning. (63: 3)

Step 3 written inventory

Take Step 3

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read Chapter 5, How it Works, pp. 58- 64: 0. Many will also read Step 3 in the *I2&I2*.
- **WRITE** Write about your thoughts and reflections on this chapter and the focus questions.
- **TALK** Call your sponsor and other members of the group to discuss the reading and your reflections.
- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION WITH MEDITATION / PRAYER**

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 3?

-The first part of Chapter 5 is often read at meetings. What might it mean to each of us?
-Perhaps one or more members of the group can share their experiences with working Step 3 by the Big Book. We each may consider sharing our written reflections on Step 3.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider pp. 60: 3-63: 3)

1.) The Problem of Self

- a.) *Each person is like an actor who wants to run the whole show.* (60: 4)
 - *Our actor is self-centered ... Are not most of us concerned with our resentments, our self-pity, or ourselves?* (61: 2-62: 0)
 - How am I like an actor? (60: 4) What roles, what masks, what characters do I play? Are these old worn out defenses? [See 73: 1; Optional *I2&I2*, 57: 1]
 - Am I *almost always in collision with something or some body?* (60: 4)
- b.) *The show doesn't come off.* (61: 1)
 - Where do I think that life does not treat me right? (61: 1)
 - Where do my actions make the other players wish to retaliate and snatch all they can get out of the show? (61: 1)
 - In my own life, am I familiar with the progression: anger => indignation => self-pity? (61: 1) Describe in detail.

- In what ways does the following describe me? *Is he not a victim of the delusion that he can wrest satisfaction and happiness out of this world if he only manages well?* (61: 1) [Is this the essence of Step 1?] -What do *delusion* (30: 2; 61: 1), *denial* (10: 1), and *manages* (61: 1) mean to me?

c.) *So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making.* (62: 2)

- What does this mean? Didn't alcohol and other people cause all my troubles?
- How do my reactions to life events make me suffer? Be specific.
- *Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity, we step on the toes of our fellows and they retaliate.* (62: 1) Is this so? How?
- Where in the past have I made decisions based on self that later placed me in a position to be hurt? (62: 1) Be specific and give details. [See what self-instincts can be threatened, and that we react to, in the Step 4 *Affects My* column (65: 2)]

2.) The Solution: *The God Idea* (45: 3; 52: 3)

- *We alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness.* (62: 2)
- How has my playing God worked, or not worked, to give me and others serenity?
- *We had to quit playing God. It didn't work.* (62: 3)
- When did I stop playing God?

3.) The Program of Action

- Can I make a decision to turn my life and will over to a higher power of my understanding, just for today?
- In what ways am I taking action on Step 3 when I abstain from alcohol and work the remaining Steps?
- Step 3 Promises: Is it possible that I could enjoy *peace of mind, face life successfully, and lose [my] fear?* (63: 1) How?

III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 3 PRINCIPLES

- How does Step 3 allow me to build on the surrender I have developed in Step 1 and Step 2?
- Am I fighting anything in recovery? What do I think would happen if I became willing to let recovery prevail in that area of my life?
- How may I reaffirm my decision on a daily basis and continue to take the action of working the rest of the Steps?
- How may I decide to let go today, and surrender to being in unison with life?

IV TAKE STEP 3 We take Step 3 in the second paragraph on BB page 63.

Have we decided that we are the *agents* of the higher power of our understanding? (62: 3) [See also 49: 1; 68: 3] Are we willing to decide to let go of our need to control, just for today?

According to the Big Book, and under the conditions of this day, we take Step 3. Some groups acknowledge taking this Step by reciting the great Third Step Prayer (63: 2). Others will join hands and recite the Step. Feel free to do what is appropriate for you and the group.

STEP 3 Written Inventory

Step 3: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.

Consider these questions, which are borrowed from meetings and recovery literature, and ones of your own. Consider responding in detail with specific examples.

Decision

Who or what made my decisions for me while drinking?

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Can I make a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of a higher power of my understanding – just for today? What fears or reservations do I have about turning my life over?

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What actions will I take to follow through on my decision to turn my life over to a higher power?

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Self-will To work Step 3 we need to identify the ways we have acted on self-will.

[*Willful*: (from ON wella- well of boiling heat) Headstrong, obstinate, rigid.

Gaining power over people and situations.] [*Willing*: Being receptive to new possibilities. Using our will in harmony with life, not against it.]

How have I been self-centered? How have I been defiant?

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Which problems have I tried to resolve through willpower? What were the results?

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In what ways are my troubles of my own making? (62: 2)

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How do my reactions to life events make me suffer? Be specific.

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In what ways am I an extreme example of *self-will run riot*? (62: 2) How have I acted on self-will?

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How has my self-will affected others?

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Have there been times in my recovery when I have found myself subtly taking back my will and my life? What alerted me? What have I done to recommit myself to the Third Step?

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The God of My Understanding

Who or what makes my decisions for me in recovery?

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Why is it okay to have a different higher power from everyone else?

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How is my higher power working in my life today? How do my higher power and I communicate? What do I do in order to be open to my higher power?

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Is my current concept of a higher power still working? How might I need to change my concept of a higher power?

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Turning It Over

What are specific examples of how I turned my life and will over to my addictions?

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How would my day look if I were to turn my will and my life over to the care of a higher power of my understanding?

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What are my fears about making this decision?

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Which thoughts and behaviors am I willing to turn over right now? Which am I holding on to?

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How do I take action to turn my will and my life over to my higher power on a daily basis? Are there any practices I do regularly? What are they?

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What have I done recently that demonstrates my surrender to recovery and to working a program?

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