

STEP THREE

“Made a decision to turn our Will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God.”

At our wits' end, many of us became willing to trust a Higher Power. Why not? Nothing we had done was working, at least not for long! Others among us felt afraid to trust this Power. What if It gave us what we believed we deserved? What if It didn't?

Upon closer examination, we were confronted with our impaired self-esteem. Were we projecting our own beliefs about ourselves onto our Higher Power who, we feared, was waiting to punish us for being so flawed? Or did we live with the omnipotent notion that we were the only ones who knew what was best for ourselves and others?

It was then we reminded ourselves that in Step Two we defined our Higher Power as being greater than we were. In working Step Three, we discovered this Power to be greater than our mistaken beliefs about who we were, greater than our distorted notions of God and greater than anything our human thinking could create.

We could ask this God of our new understanding for release from the bondage of these old ideas, one day at a time. And, if old thoughts persisted, we could continue to take the action asked of us in this step, knowing that in time healing would occur.

Made A Decision

We set this step in motion by coming to our first CoDA meeting. As time progressed and we attended more meetings, we listened, shared and began to feel relief. Each time we identified with a fellow CoDA member's story or a piece of CoDA literature, we were increasing our commitment to the first three steps and our recovery. Without realizing it, we were surrendering to the wisdom and guidance of the program.

At this point we began to see our progress. We had admitted our powerlessness over the compulsive behaviors we had practiced for so long. We were beginning to believe a Higher Power could relieve them. The next step was obvious. If we believed we were powerless and that a Higher Power could transform us, why not accept it? Why not give God a chance where we had failed? Besides, what did we have to lose but our misery?

Our Will and Our Lives

Having experienced relief from our obsession with others, some of us became complacent. We thought that having worked Step Three once, we had done our job. We quickly discovered the erroneous nature of this thinking.

Our old ideas called out to us to return to self-will. Once again, we attempted to play God in our lives and the lives of others. Old doubts sometimes challenged our new thinking. We began to believe that even though this program worked for others — we were different. Losing hope, we questioned our ability to change.

It was this experience that led us to acknowledge that this program of recovery was not a “flash in the pan,” something nice to do on a pleasant afternoon. It represented our opportunity to live as whole human beings. And, if we wanted it, we would need the willingness to go to any lengths — even if it meant asking God for help more than once.

In this moment I can choose my own Higher Power. I can set aside all the old beliefs about who I am not and be who I am — a child of God. I can remind myself that a faith in a Higher Power becomes a faith in me, and that my recovery lies in being true to myself and to my Higher Power.

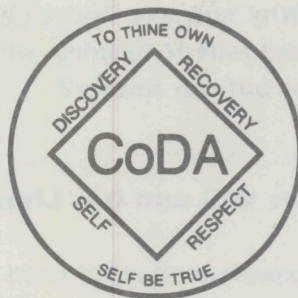
Having made the decision, our struggle ended. We became resolved that, despite the challenges we might face, we would continue on to Step Four.

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

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God,

Grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can and the Wisdom to know the difference.



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CO-DEPENDENTS ANONYMOUS

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