



STEP SEVEN

I humbly ask God to remove my shortcomings.

Steps 6 and 7 emphasize the significance of God's intervention in addressing our character defects. While Step 6 focuses on our willingness to yield these flaws to God, Step 7 centers on the humility with which we should approach Him. It is very important that we do not confuse humility with humiliation. God does not want to mortify us. He does want us to submit to him.

We need humility for three reasons:

1. So that we can recognize the severity of our character defects. One aspect of our addiction is that we tend to deny and minimize the pain they inflict. As we try to assess our character defects, we may, unless we take a very humble approach, underestimate their severity.
2. So that we can acknowledge the limits of human power in addressing these character defects. We cannot do it on our own. We cannot do it by sheer willpower. We cannot do it by our own intellect and reasoning.
3. So that we can appreciate the enormity of God's power to transform lives.

The invitation to humility is not an invitation to low self-esteem or a negative self image. In fact, quite the reverse is true. Poor self-esteem may be camouflaged by a superficial sense of false pride and by a resistance to God's intervention. In contrast, if we have healthy self-esteem, we are free to come out from behind our haughty masks and to receive and appreciate God's greatness. When our self-esteem has been restored to a proper state of balance, we are able to comfortably humble ourselves before Him.

In order for us to experience life-changing humility, however, we must be aware that:

1. What we accomplish, amass, or achieve materially will never bring us true contentment or the satisfaction of our most spiritual hunger, and
2. surrender to God's leadership cannot occur until we acknowledge our own limitations and need for his guidance. We must surrender the leadership role to God.

Here are some Bible verses that represent this step:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

The high and lofty one who lives in eternity, the Holy One, says this: I live in the high and holy place with those whose spirits are contrite and humble. I restore the crushed spirit of the humble and revive the courage of those with repentant hearts. (Isaiah 57:15 NLT)

But He gives us more and more grace (power of the Holy Spirit, to meet this evil tendency and all others fully). That is why He says, God sets Himself against the proud and haughty, but gives grace [continually] to the lowly (those who are humble enough to receive it). (James 4:6 AMP)

Although Step 7 is the shortest step in terms of wording and is perhaps the least discussed in recovery groups, it is probably the most potent of the twelve. It embodies the miracle of transformation as we turn over to God our broken, defective personalities in order that He might mold them into healthy, effective instruments of His will. A.A.'s Seventh Step Prayer words this commitment as follows:

My creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen. (Alcoholics Anonymous, page 76).



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What does *humbly ask God* in this step mean to you?

Why do we have to have our *shortcomings* removed?

What kind of situations, stressors, or pressures cause you to regress back into your defects of character? What can you do to lessen the likelihood of that stress occurring?

What are you grateful for?