

## STEP 6 : *Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character*

“...carefully reviewing what we have done.” (p. 75:3)

- *Admitting powerlessness in Step One opens us to the Power in Step Two.*
- *Believing in that Power in Step Two, prepares us for the decision to turn our thoughts and actions over to that Power in Step Three.*
- *Making that decision in Step Three sends us on a quest to face and be rid of the things that block us from God in Step Four.*
- *By identifying those defects in Step Four, we are prepared to admit them to God and another human being in Step Five.*
- *By recognizing the damage those defective thoughts have had on our lives in Step Five, we become ready to have God remove them in Step Six.*

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Driven by our defects – “*Self-will run riot*” (p. 62:2) -- manifested by our Frightened, Irresponsible, Inconsiderate, Dishonest, Selfish, Self-Seeking, and Judgmental THOUGHTS, we were “*almost always in collision with something or somebody*” (p. 60:4) →

→When “*we step on the toes of our fellows...they retaliate*” (p. 62:1)→

→When they retaliated, we got ANGRY, FEARFUL or ACTED IN A WAY which caused us GUILT, SHAME and REMORSE →

→And when we felt that way, we ended up drinking or drugging.

So, if the ACTION of drinking is the END RESULT of our “defective” THOUGHTS, then surely those things in the fifth column of our Fourth Step have now become objectionable to us -- “*We have commenced to see their terrible destructiveness*” (p. 70:3). Are we ready to turn them loose?

“*Are we now **ready** to let God remove from us all the things which we have admitted are objectionable?*” (p. 76:1).

“If we are, we’re through with Step Six and it’s time to move on to Step Seven” (Charlie Parmley).

## Thoughts on being "Entirely Ready"

There are four basic reasons we won't be "entirely ready" to work the Sixth and Seventh Steps:

- The first is a conscious decision that we will never give up a specific character defect.
- Next, we blame our defects on others: people, situations, or institutions.
- Third, we rationalize. Our capacity to rationalize is unlimited. Before recovery we spent years on this one—throwing up barriers against unpleasant realities.
- Finally, it's denial. We seem to be totally unaware of our own contribution to our problems.

We get active with the Sixth Step when we get sick and tired of the effects our character defects have had --- not so much on our past, but on our present day lives.

And in so doing, we must be willing to *challenge* and *change* patterns of thought, speech and behavior that have gone unchallenged for ten, twenty, thirty or more years.

The Sixth Step is "the Step that separates the men from the boys" (12 and 12 p.63: quoted from Fr. Ed Dowling, Bill's "Spiritual Sponsor"). The Sixth and Seventh Steps take us from the *Infancy* of Abstinence to the *Maturity* of Recovery. We actively seek and practice a new way of *living*. A new way of *being*. A new way of *thinking*. A new way of *behaving*. A new way of *relating*.

Some wait until they are in so much pain that they choose to participate only enough to get the pain to stop, then revert to their old patterns of living, being, thinking, behaving and relating.

Some think they can never be forgiven or relieved of their defects. This conscious decision and rationalization is not humility, but another form of "playing God." It is a way of saying that *my character defects are more powerful than my Higher Power's forgiveness*. By working the Seventh Step, we discover that those shortcomings are NOT more powerful than our Higher Power's ability to affect their change!

The true action of the Sixth and Seventh Steps culminates in dropping the rock. Letting go of all the stubborn, grasping, stupid holding on to of old patterns of behavior, thinking, and feeling that are harmful to our progress in recovery.