

Step Six -- Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. We began to accept ourselves as we are, and to take responsibility for our actions. Accepting who we are now requires humility. Acknowledge lovingly to yourself that this is who I am just for today and it's okay. We realized we could not "fix" ourselves. We had to be patient and leave the results up to God.

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Being entirely ready to do anything is a daunting task, especially for those of us who have remained embattled with perfectionist thinking. Fear of not being perfect exemplifies just how our defects bar us from our High Power. This step has been called step 3 to the second power - as it asks us to accept our imperfections and trust our Higher Power with the task of removing all our defects. One may mistakenly think that upon completing this step they will be perfect, but the outcome is unknown and will be determined by your higher power.

Let us look at some key words of this step:

Entirely Ready- These words do not ask us to do anything, just to be ready. Ready is defined as being "prepared mentally or physically for some experience or action" (<http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/ready>). In this step, we experience this as we have just completed the exhaustive task of our inventory and admitting the exact nature of our wrongs - we have accepted all that we are and continue to build a relationship with our higher power and the fellowship. After this process, we are entirely prepared for our Higher Power to come in and remove our defects. By taking steps one through five, in this step we fully realize and feel the impact of all the steps before.

Remove - The word remove has several definitions including "to move from a place or position" and "the distance by which one person, place, or thing is separated from another" (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/remove>). This tells us that our defects may still exist, but the distance between them and us may change, or like players on a field they may be relocated to a better position - like the bench!

Defects of Character - Funny that we may be uncertain about having defects of character removed or just so desperate that we run and hide. The truth of the matter is in our disease we learned to rely on our defects, we learned to hold on to them with all our might to fuel our sick thinking and confirm our false conceptions. In this step, we become willing to have these defects removed, to make space for our assets, for God to enter and fill each and every corner - illuminating the long lost character that we have hidden away.

This step will not happen in a certain period - it may not be obvious – but you will feel it as you stop looking for the results and go through the process.

Different EDA Members' Step Six Experiences

I had to be honest and ask myself what benefits I was getting from each character defect. Although I may suffer a great deal with some defects and they may cause me much pain, some of them are comfortable, give me an excuse to stay stuck or are just downright too delicious to give up. For example, I was not ready to maintain a healthy weight until I admitted that I wanted extra weight for protection from people, feeling my feelings and facing some truths about my life. I also struggle with people pleasing and although it's painful, I fear giving it up because I believe I have to do something or be some ideal person I imagine people want me to be in order to be liked. Another one is feeling like a victim. I like putting myself in situations where I may be the victim because I was to be congratulated for suffering, like it is noble and Godly. Until I am honest with myself about the nature of my defects and how they are useful to me, I cannot let the sunlight of the spirit come into my life and be a channel of peace and love.

Step Six Exercises

Remember: You do not need to find "perfect" answers. If what you are doing does not feel "good enough," it is your disease talking. Relax. It is okay. Find joy in discovering yourself. Patience and a sense of humor are helpful. This is an opportunity to practice them.

The following questions help with your Step Six explorations. Use them as suggestions for your journaling. Feel free to write about whatever else they bring up and share them with a friend, therapist or sponsor.

1. Reflect on the experience of each step that came before this one – what did you learn, how did you grow, what surprised you the most? Review your comments the write how these experiences have prepared your for step six.

2. How do you envision yourself if your character defects were removed?

3. Are you willing to be uncomfortable? What do you need to do to walk through discomfort (get support, music, meetings, etc...)?

4. Write down each defect of character in the order of most to least willing or ready to have removed. What do you fear, hold on to, wish for or resist? Meditate on how your Higher Power would respond to your concerns and write down what you "hear."

5. Put the above list of defects into your God Box - if you do not have a Higher Power Box - make one.

6. Let go and move to step Seven

Work your way all through the above exercises and discuss the results with someone you feel comfortable with like your sponsor or friend.

Welcome to the end of step 6! Feel free to move on to step 7. Trust that all of this will make more sense over time.

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