

STEP OF THE MONTH-STEP 6

6 Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

The leader of our workshop this past weekend helped us understand the action steps, 4–9. Step 6 doesn't seem like an action. After all, it's not even phrased as an action verb: "were entirely ready...".

So what action are we taking, and why? Well, it's this simple: We are approaching what might be the most important decision we will make in recovery, the decision to finally stop living our lives on self-will and to start living by God's will.

As our workshop leader told us, there's a blurry line between steps 5 and 6. The Big Book tells us, just before step six, that once we've read off our inventory we spend an hour with our higher power. Reading that inventory is like watching a slow-motion movie of our life. If we've been completely honest and thorough, we will be ready to have all that's objectionable removed from us. But will we be willing?

On page 76, the Big Book asks, "Are we now ready to let God remove from us all the things which we have admitted are objectionable? Can He now take them all—every one?" In other words, do we want to keep holding on to a few things? A resentment against someone who wronged us deeply? Justified anger? A comfortable old way of looking at the world that we think keeps us safe from its ups and downs? The way we talk to others? The way we listen, or don't? Aggressive driving? The need to be right? The need to control? The idea that we can rely on ourselves? Eating compulsively to quash our feelings?

These and a hundred-hundred worn out ideas and ways of conducting ourselves in the world have to go. Otherwise we will eat again. Think of our lives like a damaged ship. We wouldn't go back to sea having repaired the boat save for one little hole in hull. Even if the hole measured just a few inches across, eventually enough water would stream in that we would sink. It is the same with our recovery. We are about the business of giving ourselves to our higher power so that we can be fully repaired—by God—and sent back into the world to help others. If we deceive ourselves into hanging onto just a couple little things, then, like the ocean filling the ship, our ego will find that weak point and fill our souls back up with the very kind of junk we'd just read about during step 5. The stuff that makes us want to eat.

Yet, despite the fact that we didn't come into OA on a winning streak, we have this uncanny knack for hanging onto behaviours that have proven again and again to cause us pain and suffering. Step 6 is about getting honest on this account. About finally getting ourselves fully and unquestionably ready to abandon the stuff that doesn't work in our lives. And because we are probably the worst judges of what does and doesn't work in our lives, we have to give it all away to God, the good and the bad. That's how we avoid even the potential for hanging onto to something objectionable that can lead us back to eating again.

Steps 6 and 7 get very little airtime in the Big Book, but they are the turning point in our recovery. Up until then, we've been dealing with our problems. Once we get through step 7, we restart our lives in the solution. But for step six, the good news is that we are only becoming perfectly willing, not perfectly able. It turns out that giving away our character defects is a lifelong process, and one that brings us closer and closer to God. So in step 6, we have simply to tell ourselves, that, yes, this is something I'm signing up for. From here on out, I'm going to get out of God's way by not trying to do it my way.

From "Seacoast OA", UK Blog Archives, June 14, 2015

JUST FOR TODAY

"It is easier to confess a defect than to claim a quality"
Max Beerbohm

Ask me to name one outstanding quality about myself and I will hem and haw, knowing deep down that my best self-appraisal is unreliable. It seems safer to be derogatory than complimentary, to criticize rather than praise.

Perhaps it is habit that leads me in that direction. Often I am not conscious of my reproachful thoughts until they are clearly on the surface. Then, I turn them over to my Higher Power, ask to have them removed so I may be free to live fully, without either arrogance or false modesty.

For today: For an honest, balanced view of myself, I take a few moments in which I free my mind of everything except God's love for me.

From "OA For Today" Daily Reader. June 1, page

OA Online Resources

On our website go to <http://www.aoantario.org/documents/> and scroll to OA podcasts for a variety of topics, speakers and meditations.

OA Region 6 website go to <http://www.oaregion6.org> to find out more online news and resources for our region.

Podcasts and virtual workshops from around the world are also recorded and available on the WSO OA website, at www.ao.org

OA World Service Site has a continuous feed of workshops on their podcasts at <https://ao.org/whats-new/>.

For June-Step 6 Podcast
<https://ao.org/podcasts/step-six-june-14-2015/>

Literature

Our Committee has created a new list. Visit our website/
www.aoantario.org/literature for ordering information.

www.avision4you Daily Podcasts and Special Editions, teaching and practices outlined in the Big Book.

Announcements

★**SAVE THE DATE FOR "TORONTO NORTH" CONVENTION!**
Hear from people who have "hit bottom" only then to find a life changing solution in the 12-step program and fellowship of Overeaters Anonymous. Saturday, September 17, 2016, from 9:30am-4:00pm. Ray Twinney Complex, 100 Eagle St. W, Newmarket. Free Admission. A pay-what-you-like "7th Tradition" will be collected. For more information email TorontoNorthOA@gmail.com

★**SAVE THE DATE FOR COI CONVENTION IN OCTOBER**
The 2016 Central Ontario Intergroup convention has been changed from the spring to the fall this year and will be held Saturday, October 29th, 2016 at the Agricola Lutheran Church at 25 Old York Mills Rd at Yonge and York Mills. Volunteers are needed to help plan the convention. Some of the roles needed are Hotel Liaison - individual; Service Coordinator-individual; Entertainment Committee; Literature Committee; Signs & Decorations Committee and Fundraising. For more information contact conventionchair@aoantario.org.

Celebrating Abstinence

★Janet F. Celebrated 25 years May 22

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Monthly Intergroup Meeting

Central Ontario Intergroup meets on the second Saturday of each month at 830 Bathurst Street (main floor), Toronto 10:00 a.m.-12 noon. This is an important meeting where issues of OA as they pertain to Central Ontario Intergroup and the program as a whole are discussed. Each OA group is asked to send someone to represent their meeting in the discussions and to bring back information to the group. **All OA members are welcome and invited to attend.**

Positions Available in our Intergroup

Vice-Chair; Office Manager; Recording Secretary; Public Information Chair can be filled by members with 6 months of Abstinence.

*Please note that some of these positions can be fulfilled remotely and do not require members to travel to Intergroup.

Updated Meeting List available online

<http://www.aoantario.org/meetings/>

PLEASE SEND ALL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ARTICLES YOU WISH INCLUDED IN THE ABBIE TO, abbie@aoantario.org
We need articles on how OA and the 12 Steps helped

What Would G-d Have Me Be? Step 4, Fears

Step 4 is the second most misunderstood step (step 3 is the other one). People believe that Step 4 is scary, difficult, long, and complicated.

As a result, they tarry, procrastinate and postpone. I know, because I did it...many times. But Step 4 is actually empowering, easy, short, and simple when done according to the instructions in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. I feel empowered because I am finally focused on something (someone) that I have lots of influence over: myself! This realization helped to let go of the futility and resulting demoralization that comes from trying to control others. I can work on myself, and that is a very liberating feeling. Also, when using the straightforward chart form proposed in the BB, step 4 can be done in 2 or 3 weeks; No kidding.

I followed the chart to deal with my resentments and uncover and discover where I had been selfish, self-seeking, dishonest, and fearful. Now I do the same for my fears. I deal with my fears after I address my resentments because, although some fears come out of nowhere (like my fear of dying prematurely, G-d forbid), I have already identified most of my fears in connection with my resentments. For example, my fear that my kids will grow up to be irresponsible is a cause of my resentment towards them for not taking out the garbage when I ask them.

As with resentments, my fears arise out of my selfishness. I have been taught that selfishness is wanting to get MY WAY. So it follows that resentment is not getting my way in the past, anger is not getting my way in the present, and fear is not getting my way in the future. Why might I not I get my way in the future? Because I cannot control people, places, things and situations. My self-reliance fails me. I am powerless over my kids' behaviour and their future. Only G-d and they can guide their destiny.

So I need to look at how I am being selfish (I don't want to suffer if my kids have difficult lives), self-seeking (I want to feel proud and be admired for having such responsible children), and dishonest (I can only feel secure if my children grow up to have good character). Then I ask G-d to remove my fears and direct my attention to what he would have me be (BB, p.68). The key here is "BE," not "DO". My sponsor hammered into me that I am a human BEING, not a human DOING. So, what would G-d have me BE? He would have me BE unconditionally loving and accepting of my kids, a patient mother and a good role model. Above all, He would have me be totally reliant upon Him to take care of my kids' future and mine.

The Big Book promises in page 100 "When we look back, we realize that the things which came to us when we put ourselves in G-d's hands were better than anything we could have planned. Follow the dictates of a Higher Power and you will presently live in a new and wonderful world, no matter what your present circumstances!" So G-d does not need my help or my worry...What an amazing concept.

Neseh R.

**THANK YOU
KEEP COMING BACK!**