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Step Six — *"Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."*

Room to Grow

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

The way I read Step Six, Bill seems to be saying, "Don't be in too much of a hurry to get better." And the longer I'm sober, the clearer it becomes that I'm not really in charge of this getting better business any more than I was in charge of my drinking. Change is a mysterious and a complex process, however simple the AA program.

Because I'm retired with lots of time to spend, I go to a couple of Step meetings a week, and I do a lot of polite listening at them. I hear people talk about changes that sound so radical and complete in connection with Step Six that I really can't identify.

In what sense can I claim to be "entirely ready" to have God remove all these defects of character if I don't even know what they are? The Big Book says that "more will be revealed." To me, this means that more will be revealed about me as I get to know myself.

I've been sober in AA for twenty-nine years, and I sometimes see things in my behavior that shock me. I'm often amazed to discover a defect that has been giving me trouble all my life but I hadn't seen it before. So how do I get to see my defects?

My experience is that these defects have to bother me before I even know they are there. It's a lot like the drinking: my behavior as an active alkie got other people's attention long before it got mine. But I didn't do anything about it until that drinking started to bother me. And it's been the same with my defects of character.

One of the really inspired things about the AA program is how beautifully interconnected the Steps are. We place a lot of importance on the order of the Steps, not because we take them in order but because it's an orderly program. A real conscious experience with Step Six is not possible for me without a conscious encounter with all the Steps that follow and come before it.

Take Eight and Nine: these Steps concern my personal relations, which the "Twelve and Twelve" says are the cause of nearly all my problems, including my alcoholism. How can I become willing to have God remove problems with personal relations before I know I have them? They are not just about me, they are me. Take these defects away and I don't know who I am anymore. Having these things removed sounded to me like having your teeth out. What do you do when they're all gone?

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Are you registered for the State Convention? If you would like to volunteer to help sell books at the InterGroup table that week, please call the office. Thanks

Concept VI

The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.

Tradition Six - “An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.”

Big Dreams and Lofty Goals

Early in sobriety, I joined with a group of friends in almost duplicating the mistakes described in the discussion of Tradition Six in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

We saw what we thought of as a compelling need in our community, and we set out to fill that need. A non-profit corporation was established with the ambitious goal of setting up a community outreach and education program regarding alcoholism. We dreamed of a twenty-four-hour hotline for alcoholics, their families, and anyone else affected by alcoholism. We planned a detoxification facility, a long-term sober living community, and an educational program for the entire community.

We included in our planning two small-business owners, a stockbroker, a dental technician, two office workers, a steelworker, and a union organizer. No one involved with our group had any knowledge or expertise in the fields of alcoholism education or treatment, but we didn't let that deter us. After all, we were all recovering alcoholics, and if we could recover, anything was possible.

A proposal was drawn up and submitted to one of the community organizations established during the War on Poverty--and we were granted one year's salary for a full-time employee. An abandoned house which had been scheduled for demolition was located and the landlord agreed to contribute its use for one year. The building was rehabilitated using donated labor and materials, phone lines were installed, and volunteers were recruited to answer them.

Presentations were made to local civic organizations and unions. One union donated a thousand dollars, which paid for the telephone service and utilities. A grant proposal was written and submitted to the state, outlining our plans and requesting funds in order to move forward. It appeared that our dreams were well on the way to being realized.

Then reality intruded. The state, recognizing that we had no real expertise, refused our request for funding. One of our members encountered personal problems and dropped out. Our volunteers, recognizing that no real purpose was being served, gradually dropped away. By the end of a year, we had lost our one paid employee and had no money to hire anyone else. What had begun with such promise and high hopes ended with hardly a ripple.

Looking back on our failed dreams, I see I have a great deal for which to be grateful. First, we all stayed sober through this experience and learned from it. Second, throughout this adventure we had the advantage of knowing the Traditions which had come about through the experience of AA as a whole. At no time did we use the AA name in connection with our project. Never did we imply that AA had endorsed our plans, nor did we give the impression of affiliation with our local AA groups. When our lofty ambitions failed to materialize, and our lack of knowledge and experience led to dissolution of our structure, AA was not affected.

Our project did have two positive results. The house we had rehabilitated was not torn down but became an income unit for the owner. And we gained some experience to share with others who might dream big dreams and set lofty goals. Go ahead with your head in the clouds--but keep your feet firmly planted on the ground.

—Mickey H., Springville, UT

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A BIG THANK YOU TO THE VOLUNTEERS
who helped sell books at the recent Big Book Seminar in Boca

Jason D.

Patty L.

Steve B.

Marlene P.

Howie K.

Michelle

Denise J.

Jason E.

Local Readers Share.....

This passage has helped me at work with difficult people, difficulty in relationships, and of course the South Florida traffic.

“When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, or situation – some fact of my life – unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment.” Excerpt from the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, page 417.

It's truly amazing when you keep saying this Mantra over and over again, to see how much peace is restored in your life.

I repeated this phrase and also carried the Acceptance pamphlet with me everywhere in early sobriety. I think it saved lives.

Acceptance is the Key to all my problems today and every day.

—Jan S., Hollywood

Volunteer Opportunities

The **2018 DISTRICT 9 GRATITUDE DINNER** to be held in November will have their next planning meeting at the Fourth Dimension Club, 4425 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood on **Sunday, June 24th at 1:30 PM**

The **2018 Florida State Convention** to be held at **FORT LAUDERDALE BEACH**

Will have their next Planning Meeting on **Saturday, June 16th at 9 AM**
Broward County Water & WWTF, 2555 W Copans Rd., Bldg. #2, Pompano Beach

Pick up a commitment today!!

SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER



(continued from page 1)

Several things keep this imagined danger at a safe distance. First, my defects are never all gone. "Desires can always be found which oppose the grace of God." And if this is a process, not an event resulting in perfection, then I can be sure that I'll be going through it for the rest of my life.

There's plenty of reason to think that this will be the case and plenty of reason to be glad that it will be. For one thing, I need never worry about getting bored, because there's nothing left to do. That I have defects of character makes me useful. Having to struggle against these means I have something to share with others.

But how do I even approach being entirely ready? The program is self-explaining, but I have to look at everything that's in it and not just excerpts. Our literature says that suffering is the touchstone of all growth. No pain, no gain. Because of defective human relations, I don't have attachments, I have adhesions. And in the grip of dependent relations I feel my humanity get squeezed. I suffer those excesses of negative emotion that the "Twelve and Twelve" talks about. I find out what it feels like not to have emotional sobriety. The questions posed at the beginning of Step Ten become suddenly relevant and important: "can we stay sober, keep in emotional balance, and live to good purpose under all conditions?"

My experience in AA tells me that the answer to the first question is yes, and the answer to the second is no. To the third, it depends on who you ask. The willingness to change is something that comes and goes with me. Now I have it. Now I don't. Like faith, courage, hope, and all the other good things in the Promises, willingness comes and goes. Is there any reason to feel bad about this? I don't think so.

I don't believe I could have stayed sober had I known how far I had to go and how much I had to learn. It would have been overwhelming. And had it been a whole lot easier, it might have become boring. Nothing more to learn? No new horizons? And what about drama? Shouldn't there be a little drama in everyone's life? Had I come into AA and turned entirely ready, the way an apple turns red on the tree, what would there be left to do?

The "Twelve and Twelve" warns me that I can use this casual attitude to give myself an unlimited moral credit line in AA and put off looking at things that need fixing forever. But Step Seven tells me that I am going to ask God to remove these things--not that I am going to remove them myself.

I was at a Step meeting tonight, and the person I was talking to began to badmouth a man we both knew. I'm ashamed I didn't have the backbone to say, "You know, I really like this guy you're talking about. He's done a good job in AA and I don't want to talk about him this way." That would have taken some spine on my part. But I would have felt better for having done it. And I might have helped my friend to take a look at this practice of "confessing the sins of others." It pained me when I got home to think of how easily I had wimped out and allowed this other AA to intimidate me into agreeing that someone needed to be slandered. Because it bothered me, I was entirely ready to have God remove this defect of character. And because I was entirely ready, I could humbly ask to have it removed. Was it removed like a bad tooth? Probably not. But maybe the next time I'll be able to act differently.

Step Twelve promises a spiritual awakening as a result of these Steps. I believe I've had a number of awakenings. There's a connection between experience and learning, but it's not a direct connection. Somewhere in the process, I remain powerless over my defects but willing to be changed. As long as I'm not in charge of my recovery, God will always have more to do and I will always have more to look forward to.

—Jim N., West Springfield, Massachusetts

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HAPPY FATHER'S DAY TO ALL YOU SOBER DADS!!!

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Bridging The Gap

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Sebring, FL 33870

District 9 General Service

P.O. Box 100126
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310

AA BIRTHDAY'S

June Celebrants

Free & Easy

Bruce P. ~ 25 yrs.

Broward Men's

Larry D. ~ 3 yrs.

Rob K. ~ 1 yr.

Trevor ~ 2 yrs.

Secular and Sober

Laura H. ~ 8 yrs.

Friends of Pat C.

Mary Y. ~ 7 yrs.

5:45 Happy Hour

Sandi S. ~ 29 yrs.

I Came To Stay

Floyd G. ~ 4 yrs.

Happy Destiny

Debbie B. ~ 30 yrs.

Sober Sisters

Linda E. ~ 2 yrs.

Fran G. ~ 34 yrs.

Sandi S. ~ 29 yrs.

Men's Independence

Ken W. ~ 15 yrs.

Straight Talk

Mark O. ~ 28 yrs.

Here and Now

Stacey L. ~ 2 yrs.

East Naples Men's

Wes R. ~ 30 yrs.

Stan S. ~ 27 yrs.

Pete S. ~ 20 yrs.

Wade B. ~ 18 yrs.

Ralph O. ~ 17 yrs.

Luis F. ~ 15 yrs.

Other Notables

Ed B. ~ 33 yrs.

Hal D. ~ 23 yrs.

Lee B. ~ 32 yrs.

Kevin M. ~ 25 yrs.

Sharon M. ~ 36 yrs.

Tony O. ~ 47 yrs.

Mountain Group

Gary D. ~ 19 yrs.

Dawn D. ~ 2 yrs.

Women's Hope in

Recovery

Lynda Z. ~ 22 yrs.

Hollywood Happy Hour

Patricia B. ~ 14 yrs.

B.A.L.L.S.

Drew ~ 5 yrs.



JOIN THE BIRTHDAY CLUB!

Celebrate your sobriety by sending \$1 per every year sober to your local

Intergroup office to show your gratitude and give back once a year.

(Birthday listings are not contingent upon contributions...we just like to celebrate sobriety.)



May Celebrants – not previously mentioned

Sober Sisters

Jacquelyn ~ 1 yr.

Eye Opener

Barbara ~ 34 yrs.

Mountain Group

Andrea O. ~ 11 yrs.

Pride 5:45

Ed F. ~ 47 yrs.

West Park Sunday Morning

Sheila C. ~ 24 yrs.

B.A.L.L.S.

Jeff I. ~ 1 yr.

Let's Do Lunch

Dave ~ 6 yrs.

John B. ~ 28 yrs.

Bonaventure/Weston BB

Andre ~ 15 yrs.

East Naples Men's

Frank S. ~ 56 yrs.

Randy G. ~ 38 yrs.

Walter B. ~ 28 yrs.

Noel H. ~ 26 yrs.

Mike G. ~ 12 yrs.

Nautical Group

Larry F. ~ 25 yrs.

Hollywood Men's Group

Leo ~ 47 yrs.

Surrender is Freedom

Nathalie ~ 1 yr.

Lisa ~ 2 yrs.

Kenneth ~ 2 yrs.

David ~ 6 yrs.

Barry M. ~ 23 yrs.



BCIC - Broward County Institutions Committee

Next Meeting:

June 9th at 10:00 AM

Twelve Step House

205 SW 23rd Street

Ft. Lauderdale

Next

Intergroup Meeting

Twelve Step House

205 S.W. 23rd, Ft. Lauderdale

SUNDAY, June 17th

at 1:00 p.m.

Recovery Word Puzzle

Unscramble the letters. Answers to puzzle can be found on page 7.
Words for this puzzle have been used somewhere else in this edition of Suite 404.

E E R R T I G S D E
Z O N E S G I C R E
T R A C C H E R A A
S P I R E T R E N E
T H E R E B I L A A D T I
N O P E S I M I R S



T U N I A O T I S
M E M I N M O T T C
C R O I F T E E N
B E E L E C T R A
M A D E S A H
P I T A R P E A D C E

Using the red or underlined letters, unscramble them to fill in the blanks below for an important message.

----- !

*The principle behind the sixth
step is willingness.*



There is only one key, and it is called willingness.

(Twelve and Twelve, pg. 34)

Willingness: (noun) The quality or state of being prepared to do something.



Things we cannot change.....

Karen N. and Forrest S.

They will be missed. May they Rest in Peace.

Definition of Broward County Intergroup, Inc.

Your Intergroup office services all groups in the Broward County area. It is not a governing body and does not attempt to, nor can it, rule any AA Group. Its sole purpose is to act as a clearinghouse for the convenience of members and groups desiring assistance, and to extend the Twelve Step Work "carrying the message" to the sick alcoholic. The Intergroup office is supported entirely by contributions from groups, usually a specified amount each month or at intervals throughout the year.

The office purchases and sells all conference-approved books and literature to groups throughout Broward County.

Faithful Fivers are A.A. members who donate five dollars (\$5) a month to Intergroup as an act of gratitude. Their generosity helps us to carry the message of A.A. to the still sick and suffering alcoholic throughout the year.

Thank you to our Faithful Fivers. Your contributions are so appreciated!

Tom & Liz J., Gregory C., Sherri D., Suzanne J., Bob H., Anonymous I, Elizabeth B., Lillian M., Ron J., Tim S., Milinda B., Barbara S., Lois O., Richard H., Jennifer S., Ted K., June C., Pat R., Beth D., Trent A., Thomas T., Thomas Q., Craig G., Sandy P., Mel K., Leo H., Larry C., Jean G., Vickie T., Howie K., Kerry W., Lewis G., James B., James H., Joanne D., Jim R., Kevin B., Gerry B., Don W., Jamie B., Flemming A., Arthur R., Eric P., Tara D., Nancy S., Joey B., Denise J., Walter B., Howard S., Bob D., Arielle V., Jay L., Bonnie T., Sally S. and the Women's Step by Step Group.

Please consider becoming a "Faithful Fiver." Your commitment of \$5.00 a month to your Intergroup Office will go a long way toward helping carry the message to the still sick and suffering alcoholic who reaches out. Fill out this form and mail it in with your contribution today!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Sobriety Date and Home Group _____

Make checks payable to:

Broward County Intergroup, Inc., 3317 NW 10th Terrace, Suite 404, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309

ANSWERS TO PUZZLE: registered, recognizes, character, enterprise, rehabilitated, impression, situation, commitment, perfection, celebrate, ashamed, appreciated. Beach dining and musical coming soon!

The Question of Clubs What's the connection between clubs and AA?

I had "the gift of desperation" when I got to my first AA meeting at a club not far from my home. I was ready to do whatever it took to be free from drinking. So after hearing the pitch for joining the club at the beginning of an AA meeting, I filled out the application and turned it in. That's when the old-timer I gave it to told me I had to have ninety days of sobriety before I could join. My heart sank. There was no way I would be able to stay sober for ninety days. I felt like crying.

The old-timer assured me there was nothing to cry about, however. Alcoholics Anonymous was free, and if I wanted to be a member, I was. That's all there was to it. I didn't need to fill out an application form, pay any money, or even promise sobriety.

I like to go wherever other alcoholics gather together to help one another. Most of the meetings I go to are not in a club setting, but some are. Recently, an AA member actually said she was "grateful to the club for her sobriety." Of course, I can understand how easy it is to be confused about this. But a line from the "Guidelines on Clubs," published by AA World Services, helps me to grasp the difference between AA and a club: "Even though the group meets in a club that may be composed exclusively of AA members, and many members of the group may be club members, too, the relationship of the AA group itself to the club should be the same as it would be to a church, hospital, school, or other facility in which it might rent space for its meetings."

My home group meets in a church. The people at the church office are supportive and kind. We are happy to pay them rent, but we wouldn't dream of letting them tell us what to say in a meeting. When our group first started, we discussed what to name it at the business meeting. One of the names included the name of the church where we meet. Someone pointed out that we wouldn't want to do that because it implies affiliation. We meet at the church. In no other way are we affiliated with it.

Sometimes I get a helpful perspective on a Tradition by going through the Grapevine's Traditions Checklist. The questions were originally published in the Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that ran between November 1969 and September 1971. While they were originally intended for individual use, many AA groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.

Here is what the checklist says about Tradition Six: "Are all the officers and members of our local club for AAs familiar with the pamphlet 'Guidelines on Clubs'?"

MEETING CHANGES

Monday

NEW MEETING Men's 11 Step Candlelight Meditation Meeting meets at 8:30 PM, Prince of Peace Church, 6012 NW 9th Court, Margate, 33063. CM.

90 & 90 which met at the Porch in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

Tuesday

NEW MEETING Russian Speaking Alcoholics of S. Florida has added another meeting. 8:30 PM, OBB, All Russian speakers welcome. Twelve Step House, 205 SW 23 Street, Fort Lauderdale. This is an OPEN meeting.

Crossroads which met at the Porch in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

Wednesday

Meeting on the Porch which met in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

Sharing Your Experience which met at Lambda South in Fort Lauderdale NO LONGER MEETS.

Thursday

Atlantic Group has moved to St. Martin's in the Field and changed their start time to 7:30 PM. They are now at 140 SE 28th Avenue, Pompano Beach, 33062. The format remains the same.

NEW MEETING Sense of Purpose meets at 8 PM, Parish of Sts. Francis and Clare, 2300 NW 9th Avenue, Wil-ton Manors, CD.

New Life Beginners which met at the Porch in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

Friday

NEW MEETING Speakeasy is meeting at 7 PM, 2630 E. Oakland Park Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale 33306. CSPD.

Happy Hour Sobriety which met at the Porch in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

Saturday

Men's Meeting on the Porch which met in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

Candlelight Meditation which met at the Porch in Hollywood has moved to the 4th Dimension Club, 4425 Hollywood. Same time and format.

Saturday Nite Live Steps at the 4th Dimension Club in Hollywood NO LONGER MEETS.

DAILY MEETINGS

Downtown Drydock which meets at The Sanctuary in Ft. Lauderdale will now only have 1 meeting on every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Monday and Friday schedules remain the same.

***** **WEST BROWARD CLUB IS MOVING AGAIN—ALL GROUPS LISTED** *****
***** **AT THAT ADDRESS HAVE CURRENTLY SUSPENDED THE MEETINGS** *****

Upcoming Events

- June 3** **Founder's Day Picnic**, Snyder Park, 3299 SW 4th Avenue, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, 11 AM - 4 PM, Hawaiian Style, \$8 in advance, \$10 at gate, kids under 10 eat free, Live band, speaker at 2 PM, Volleyball, horseshoes, No pets at the picnic please.
- June 15-18** **Sisters by the Sea Women's Conference** Hilton Naples, 5111 Tamiami Trail, Naples, FL, Registration \$45. For more info go to www.sistersbythesea.org or call Intergroup.
- July 6-8** **South Florida Area 15 Quarterly Assembly** Marriott Tampa Airport, 4200 George J. Bean Parkway, Tampa, FL 33607
- Aug. 4** **Carry the Message Day** NSU, 3200 S. University Drive, Davie, FL **free service event** with a continental breakfast at 9 AM (suggested \$5 contribution) followed by Panel discussions from various committees with a Q & A workshop. Terry Building cafeteria / auditorium. This event is presented by District, Intergroup and Institutions, and is a great way to get newcomers introduced to the many different opportunities we have for service here in Broward County.
- Aug. 15-19** **62nd Florida State Convention** Harbor Beach Marriott, 3030 Holiday Drive, Ft. Lauderdale 33316, off-site parking \$5 per day with shuttle service provided, workshops, speakers, fellowship. For more information on hotel, making dinner reservations or purchasing convention merchandise go to www.floridastateconvention.com. Beautiful beachfront resort and spa!