



# *RECOVERY ROAD ONLINE*

## **RECOVERY STEP SEVEN**

**ZOOM UP THE HIGHWAY OF HOPE**



# WORKING THE RECOVERY STEPS

## “STEP SEVEN”

Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings

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Spiritual Principle: **HUMILITY**

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## SEVENTH STEP PRAYER

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.

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## **STEP SEVEN**

### **HUMBLY ASKED GOD TO REMOVE OUR SHORTCOMINGS**

The essential principle of Step Seven is humility. We are not simply asking God to remove our shortcomings, but we are doing so humbly. We are now completely willing to fully trust our higher power to remove these barricades that prevent us from seeking and doing God's will.

Humility is an especially important quality for the compulsive gambler to achieve. Far more than most people, the compulsive gambler typically has a massive ego and a truly bizarre assurance of their own infallibility. Indeed, is there any greater act of arrogance than believing that we were smarter and more powerful than mathematical laws of probability? No doubt we could also defy laws of gravity and human aging if we put our mind to it.

Of course, each one of the steps has a strong element of humility. In Step One, we admitted that we were powerless over gambling. As we made solemn promises to ourselves and our family that we would stay away from casinos and gambling websites, again and again we went back. How humbling to admit that we were even less



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powerful than these businesses that we knew were carefully constructed to systematically extract as much money from their customers as possible.

In the second step we came to believe in a power greater than ourselves and in the Third Step we made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to God. Gambling itself has humbled us to the point where we were finally willing to admit that trying to run our lives ourselves was not really going that well. Thus, we became willing to let some other power run it – even if we didn't fully understand what that power was.

In our searching and fearless moral and financial inventory, we made some often- painful discoveries about exactly what kind of a life we had been living. We perhaps realized that many of our life decisions were dictated by foolish resentments and fears. Also, we may have discovered that our selfishness, dishonesty, and other character defects were more numerous and even worse than we had suspected. These too were humbling admissions. To then share these discoveries with another person was also very uncomfortable – even to share them with a kind and understanding sponsor.



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Finally, in our Sixth Step, we looked closely at all of our character defects. We bravely categorized them by how problematic they were and how willing we were to have them removed. By working the prior steps, we should now have sufficient experience with gaining humility that we will be able to honestly ask God to remove our most problematic shortcomings.

For the purpose of working Steps Six and Seven, Recovery Road Online essentially uses the terms “character defects” and “shortcomings” interchangeably. Therefore, in order to work this step, we need only look back at our Sixth Step worksheet. To begin working this step, we should identify the top one, two, or three defects that we strongly desire to have removed. Generally speaking, the more defects that we work at once, the less is the likelihood for success. The good news is that with our new way of thinking and living, we really have our entire future lifetime to work on all of our shortcomings. However, we must not use this as an excuse for procrastination. We must begin immediately.

As we did with the Third Step, we should again initiate a regimen of daily prayer. In this case, we may want to begin with the Serenity



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Prayer, the Third Step Prayer, or some other prayer we like that provides us with comfort and helps to quiet our mind. Then we add this simple request at the end “God, please remove from me \_\_\_\_\_, so I can better do your will”. Fill in the blank with the shortcoming(s) you have identified that are causing the greatest problems or pain. Another possible prayer that may be useful for compulsive gamblers is the Seventh Step Prayer that comes from the original writing by Alcoholics Anonymous<sup>2</sup>:

***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”.***

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<sup>2</sup> The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous – page 76



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You should make an effort to do this at least three times daily for two weeks. If possible, set a reminder on your phone. In addition, you should begin to say this prayer immediately whenever you catch yourself starting to practice the shortcoming(s) that you are asking to be removed.

The results of this exercise are likely to be very gradual. In some cases, we find that the shortcoming is practically gone only to have it return months later, seemingly out of nowhere. When this happens, we should just relax and quietly ask God to remove this once again. For some of our more stubborn character defects, it may take several years before we notice that we are completely free of its power over us. Working this step now is simply a beginning to this process. Step One is the only step we have to do perfectly. As with all of the prior steps, it is important to remember that this is a program of “progress, not perfection”.

When we have finished, making a good faith effort to remove these most troubling shortcoming(s), we may move on to Step Eight. We do this, however, with the understanding that we will be visiting this step again at some future time to work on our other shortcomings.



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We are ready to move on to Step Eight.

