



RECOVERY ROAD ONLINE

RECOVERY STEP THREE

ZOOM UP THE HIGHWAY OF HOPE



WORKING THE RECOVERY STEPS

“STEP THREE”

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to care of God, *as we understood Him.*

SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: FAITH & WILLINGNESS

THIRD STEP PRAYER

God,
I offer myself to Thee to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy way of life. May I do Thy will always!



STEP THREE

MADE A DECISION TO TURN OUR WILL AND OUR LIVES OVER TO THE CARE OF GOD, *AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM.*

For those of us who just struggled with finding a Higher Power, the idea that we now need to turn our will and our lives over to this power may seem absurd. “What does that even mean?” “Do I have to move to Kolkata like Mother Teresa and work with the dying?” “Do I have to go door to door and try to recruit other compulsive gamblers or pass out Recovery Road Online literature at airports?” “Should I let my Higher Power determine the best driving route on my next car trip?” The whole idea seems ridiculous.

Once again, we encourage you just to relax and remain open-minded. One of the easiest ways to begin understanding what your Higher Power wants you to do is to start by being pretty sure what it* does not want you to do. It does not want you to gamble anymore. It does not want you to be unkind, dishonest or selfish. Your Higher Power wants you to be happy and free. Some of us describe our Higher Power’s will for us is simply to do the “next right thing”. This very mysterious concept really needs to be no more complicated than this.



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In order to begin the process of seeking the will of our Higher Power, we should use the ancient practice of prayer. For those of us who are experienced in prayer, we are well aware of its remarkable benefits. For those who have never tried it or think it is silly, we encourage you to just give it a go. There really is no reason not to. It has been said that the only people who scoff at prayer are those who have never tried it. Numerous studies have confirmed that prayer improves self-control, makes people nicer, improves the capacity for forgiveness, increases trust and reduces stress.

The problem that many of us have with prayer is that to the extent that we tried it at all, we did it wrong. Instead of asking for God's will for us, we were like a greedy child asking Santa for every new toy. How many times did we ask God to help us win a bet? And how many times did we lose and blame God? It should be pretty obvious by now that our Higher Power has no interest in such mundane matters as our gambling success.

*In most theologies, God is referred to with a male pronoun such as "Him". Given GA's wide latitude in identifying a Higher Power that works for each member, we will use the gender neutral "it". However, each member should be free to use "him" or "her" if they prefer.



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OVER TO THE CARE OF GOD, *AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM.*

A good way to begin the practice of prayer is with the “Serenity Prayer” that we say at every meeting –

God, grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.

This simple prayer has been adopted by people suffering from many different addictions throughout the world. At its basic level we understand that we need to seek serenity to accept the fact that we are compulsive gamblers and we cannot change that. However, we can change our behavior and work the Recovery Road Online Twelve Steps of Recovery. This will allow us to never have to gamble again and obtain a new life that is happy and free.

Sometimes there is confusion about where exactly the line is between the things we cannot change and the things we can. Usually that line is our skin. The reality is that we can rarely fundamentally change other people or what they do or say - in other words, things outside of our skin. However, we can change our



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perspectives and reactions to them – that is to say, things inside of our skin. When we are bothered by something that someone does, we are asking God for the serenity to accept (not necessarily like) that person exactly as they are and the courage to change our perspective and actions towards them. With enough time and persistence, this prayer is almost always granted.

Another prayer that is useful for compulsive gamblers and worth memorizing is the Third Step Prayer that we borrowed from our friends at Alcoholics Anonymous¹:

“God, I offer myself to Thee, to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love & Thy Way of Life. May I do Thy will always.”

¹ The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous – page 63



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Some people find comfort in the Old English language and use of words like thee, thou and wilt. Other people think that sounds too much like church which they have an aversion to and so prefer this version:

God, I offer myself to you – to build with me and to do with me as you will. Relieve me of the bondage of self that I may better do your will. Take away my difficulties that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of your power, your love and your way of life. May I do your will always.

Either version is fine. You are encouraged to read this prayer very carefully, so you fully understand it. It is an expression that you are now willing to trust this Higher Power to guide you. You are acknowledging that what had been enslaving you was simply the “bondage of self” and you need to be released from this selfish, self-



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centered life. You ask to have your problems removed, not for yourself, but only so that others can benefit from seeing the positive results of this effort.

At this point we recommend that you copy this prayer down on a piece of paper and carry it with you or else put it on your phone. You should begin the practice of finding a quiet place at least three times a day and saying this prayer. Try to commit it to memory. Set an alarm on your phone, if possible, to remind yourself to do this. After one week of this exercise, discuss it with your sponsor.

Now that we have made a decision to turn our will and our life over to the care of our God, we need to pray for the willingness and strength to work the remaining steps. If we ever get stuck working any of the remaining steps and we begin to procrastinate, that is usually just because of fear. If this happens, we can just quietly say the Third Step Prayer and ask for the willingness to continue.



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If we believe that we have made a decision to try turning our will and our lives over to God, one of the best ways to put this new way of life to the test is by making a searching and fearless moral and financial inventory. We are now ready to move on to Step Four.

