

STEP 7

Humbly asked God (of our understanding) to remove our shortcomings.

Now you're being asked to seek, to remove, via your Higher Power, your character defects. Is this really necessary? It certainly is! Character defects were a major portion of the reason one gambled. Therefore, keeping these defects can lead one back to gambling.

For example, let's take one defect - anger. Assume you get into an argument, handle it poorly and become blindly angry, anger turns into rage. Then you feel something must be done to relieve this terrible hateful feeling and resort to what comes naturally - gambling. In the past as you know that pain caused by anger was at least temporarily eased through gambling. Compulsive gambling is a learned, inadequate response to life. You must rid yourself of the disturbances that you have acquired through gambling.

What can be done to prevent such a relapse? First, you must have a desire to remove this defect. To realize the shortcoming can destroy you, desire comes more easily if you realize what is at stake. If you are masochistic, the desire to change may be slower in coming. Assuming you want to live, however, try to take the step as indicated and humbly ask your Higher Power to remove the defect.

Humbly ask for help? A nice guy who never hurt anyone except himself? When you've survived for so long, all by yourself, how can you humbly ask for help? Look at your track record with absolute honesty. Have you really been a winner? This honest look at your chaotic years should assure you that anger must go, if only a little at a time. You can only concentrate on one defect at a time. This is a slower process but it enables you to focus more clearly. Also, working defects singly is, for most, more comfortable.

Having selected a defect, seek help from your Higher Power. Each morning shortly after getting up, seek the will of your Higher Power daily as life's problems arise. Ask for help in reducing or removing the defect on which you will be working on that day. You must do the leg work so your Higher Power can finish the job as He sees fit.

At this point, learning to cope is a new adventure. This is something many refused or were unable to do before entering Gamblers Anonymous. It's strange at first, but each time you cope you get better at it. When you leave the world of reality and slip into irrational anger, you should now be able to recognize that something is wrong. You now have to get yourself back on the right track so you can go deal with today. Anger, the defect on which you were working still might be a problem. It will scare you when you react with so little control. Anger could lead you back to a bet via the hatred and resentment created. You're not entitled to be angry; it's an enemy, not a friend.

Each day, practice restraint until, God willing, you have formed a beautiful new habit, a positive habit. Today anger should be under control and cannot lead you back into your addiction. Feel good about that. The same procedure can then be applied to another defect. Now you can see how your Higher Power can remove defects, if your Higher Power chooses to do so.

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Step Seven states that acquiring greater humility is the foundation of the Twelve Steps.

1. Without this precious quality we cannot expect happiness.
2. The word "Humility" is disliked and greatly misunderstood in our world.

DISCUSS:

- A. Is a humble individual a weak individual?
- B. Was our gambling a show of courage and/or proof that we were different from our fellows?

Depending exclusively on our individual strength and intelligence is a blockade to faith in God.

1. Admitting our powerlessness was the 1st step to liberation from our gambling obsession.
2. Some humility was required to stop gambling and to walk through the GA doors.

DISCUSS:

- A. Your growth in Gamblers Anonymous.
- B. Dependence on meetings, sponsor, etc. ...
- C. First meeting: Shame? Fear? Other...?

We have acquired some peace by working Steps 4, 5 and 6.

1. These humbling steps have provided a source of serenity.
2. We should face this fact and proceed to search for deeper personal objectives.

DISCUSS:

- A. What is blocking our will to have certain defects removed?
- B. What are the benefits of prayer and meditation?
- C. Do we have a willingness to be honest, tolerant and more loving? Why?

DISCUSS:

- A. What is the meaning of the Serenity Prayer? (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).
 - B. Who or what will we become if this prayer is answered?
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