
QUESTIONS FOR WRITING

The purpose of writing the third step is to help us “make a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him”. Go through the following examples and be as honest and specific as you are able at this time. Give specific examples and situations from you own life.

YOU ARE IN THE PROCESS OF MAKING A DECISION.

1. In what ways are you aware that the problems in your life are a result of the acquired thinking of your mind?
2. In what ways does Step Three call for action on your part?
3. How have you blocked God from you life? Give examples.
4. Explain your understanding of God at this point in the program.
5. What do you think self-will is? List some of the ways it has caused havoc in your life.
6. “Dependence on God is really a means of gaining true independence.” What does this mean to you?
7. How did Steps One and Two prepare you for Step Three?
8. Do you feel you are now truly willing to turn your will and life over to the care of God as you understand Him? Explain

HERE IS THE THIRD STEP PRAYER. Rephrase it in your own words and ask another person to hear you pray it.

“God, I offer myself to Thee – to build with me and 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. Amen” (Alcoholics Anonymous, p 63)

Third Step Guide

“Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.”

In the preceding steps we were engaged in reflection. In Step One, we saw that we were, are now, and remain powerless over lust. Also, in Step One we came to recognize that our lives have been, are now, and will remain unmanageable by us alone. Step Two made us aware that we could be restored to sanity by a Power greater than ourselves if we rightly relate ourselves to this Power. These conclusions did not require action; they required only acceptance. At this point, we should have accepted the unmanageability and the insanity of our lives.

The first requirement in doing step Three is that we become convinced that any life run on self-will cannot be a success. Obviously, the first two steps show, in no uncertain terms, the confusion caused by using will (self-will is a part of the acquired false self). Self-will includes selfishness – self-centeredness. This self-centeredness is the root of our troubles. So our troubles are basically our own making. We must, or it kills us. We found that we could not reduce our self-centeredness much by wishing or relying on our own power. Thus, we had to quit playing God. It will not work.

Step Three calls for affirmative action, for it is only by action that we can cut away the self-will which always blocked the entry of God into our lives. The key that will allow God to enter our lives once again is willingness. The thinking mind and its self-will may block the entry of God into our lives once again, and frequently does. However, the key of willingness will open the door.

The thinking mind, using instinct and logic to bolster our egotism, would have us believe that, if we turn our will and life over to the care of God, we become nothing. We lose something that appears to be important to us. The truth is, the more we become willing to depend upon a Higher Power, the more independent we actually are! Therefore, dependence, as SA practices it, is really a means of gaining true independence of spirit.

Step Three asks us to make a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him. This decision can only be made by us. All by our selves, being convinced that self-will has ruined our lives, we need to develop the quality of willingness. By becoming willing, we can make the decision to exert ourselves. Doing this is an act of our own will. Remember, all of the steps require our sustained personal, and intentional cooperation to conform to their principles and to God’s will.

The effectiveness of the whole SA program will rest upon how well and earnestly we try to come to a decision to “turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him”. The other steps of the SA program can be practiced with success only when Step Three is given determined and persistent effort. Thus, we try to make our will conform with God’s so that we can begin to use it rightly.

Once we are convinced we have no choice but to turn our lives over to God, then it is easy to begin the practice of Step Three. In time of confusion, we pause quietly and say: *“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. Thy will, not mine be done.”*