
Sixth Step Guide

“Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”

In doing Step Four honestly, we made a searching and fearless moral inventory of our character defects. Also, after we completed Step Five, the exact nature of our wrongs were then brought out into the open. Using both the lists of acquired defects (Step Four) and the recognition of our wrongs (Step Five), we are now able to begin Step Six.

Step Six consists of two areas. The first area involves a detailed look at the acquired character defects that we are aware of at this point in the SA program. These defects range from mild (for example, telling only half-truths to people) to severe (for example, using people and loving things). As we investigate these acquired defects thoroughly, we will be able to list these defects – ranging from mild to severe. At the very least, we must face up to the severe defects and take action toward their removal and attempt to control them. These severe defects are blocks to our uncovering the True Inner Self. They must be dealt with immediately. The milder acquired character defects may be the ones that we enjoy hanging on to. Again, we must recognize these defects that we are “comfortable” with.

The second area of Step Six is becoming entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. Readiness is the key to this Step. We will need to make a brand new venture into open-mindedness. The acquired character defects that we are not, as yet, willing to take action on, may be removed as we become willing to ask God to help us become willing. As we apply Step six to all the acquired character defects, without any reservations whatever, this process expands the degree of readiness. Once again willingness, open-mindedness and honesty are absolutely essential to this Step.

At this stage, if we have become aware of the acquired character defects and have the readiness to have God remove them, the question – will God remove all these defects – comes up. Step Six does not mean that we should expect all the defects to be removed as was the obsession to lust. A few of the acquired character defects may be, but with most of them we shall have to be content with patient improvement.

Once we are aware of the acquired character defects (being a part of our false self), then we must exercise self-discipline. Our self-discipline, when applied to the process of patient elimination of these defects, will deepen our awareness that we must ask for God’s help in eliminating them. Only through deeper and deeper awareness of God within us, can we hope to conform to God’s will.

The purpose of writing this Sixth Step is to help us become aware of the acquired character defects – the ones we must take action on. Also, this process develops the readiness which is the key for this Step.

Go through the following examples and be as thorough and honest as you are willing to at this time. You are after the destructive, acquired character defects, both mild and severe.

WRITING EXERCISE – STEP SIX

1. Make a list of all the acquired defects of character that you are aware of at this time. As a starting point, use the list from Step Four and the exact nature of your wrongs from Step Five. Add to it any new defects that you have uncovered.
2. What does *“Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character”* mean to you?
3. How am I going to live Step Six on a daily basis?
4. Where do you find the inspiration to have God remove all these defects of character?
5. At this point, identify the assets of your True Inner Self and the liabilities of the acquired self (The True Inner Self is of God and the false self is the acquired character defects.)