Step working guide na step 3 notes template pdf

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the item on Amazon. It also analyzed reviews to verify trustworthiness. Learn more how customers reviews work on Amazon 1 The Narcotics Anonymous Step Working Guide 2 This is NA Fellowship-approved literature "Copyright ~ 1998, World Service Office, Inc. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved." Preface The idea for this piece of
literature came from the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship itself. Beginning in the early 1980s, we began receiving Twelve Step guides and step worksheets along with requests that we develop a standard set of guides for the NA World Service
Conference Literature Committee's priority wordlists, and finally resulted in the World Service Conference directing the WSCLC to go ahead with the project at WSC'95. The working title for this project for many years was the "Step Writing" imposed a limitation on members who may be unable
to write or may choose not to use writing as the means for working the Twelve Steps. Therefore, the title became the provoke thought about the questions, but is not meant to be comprehensive. There is a difference in "voice" between the narrative
and the questions. The narrative is written in the "we" voice in order to promote unity about what we all have in common: our addiction and recovery. The questions are written in the individual "I" voice so that each member using these guides can personalize the work. The Step Working Guides is a companion piece to It Works: How and Why.
Thorough discussion of each of the Twelve Steps is contained in that work. Additional information about NA recovery can be found in other NA literature. If we find that any of the terms used in this book are unfamiliar, we should feel free to make use of a dictionary. These guides are meant to be used by NA members at any stage of recovery, whether
it's our first time through the steps or we've been living with the steps as our guiding force for many years. This book is intentionally written to be relevant to newcomers and to help more experienced members develop a deeper understanding of the Twelve Steps. As NA grows in numbers, in diversity, and in strength and longevity of clean time, we
need literature that will continue to serve the needs of the fellowship 1 literature that "grows" along with the fellowship. However, as open and inclusive as we tried to be when writing these guides, we realized that we wouldn't have tried to do
that, even if we thought it were possible. This book contains guides to working the Twelve Steps toward recovery; it does not contain recovery itself. Recovery is ultimately found in each member's personal experience with working the steps. You can add to these guides, delete from them, or use them as they are. It's your choice. 3 There's probably
only one inappropriate way to use these guides: alone. We can't overemphasize the importance of working with a sponsor in working the steps. In fact, in our fellowship, a sponsor is considered, first and foremost, a guide through the Twelve Steps. In fact, in our fellowship, a sponsor is considered, first and foremost, a guide through the Twelve Steps. In fact, in our fellowship, a sponsor is considered, first and foremost, a guide through the steps. In fact, in our fellowship, a sponsor is considered, first and foremost, a guide through the steps. In fact, in our fellowship, a sponsor is considered, first and foremost, a guide through the steps. In fact, in our fellowship, a sponsor is considered, first and foremost, a guide through the steps. In fact, in our fellowship, a sponsor is considered, first and foremost, a guide through the steps. In fact, in our fellowship, a sponsor is considered, first and foremost, a guide through the steps.
reading all the available information about any of the Twelve Steps will never be sufficient to bring about a true change in our lives and freedom from our disease. It's our goal to make the steps part of who we are. To do that, we have to work them. Hence, the Step Working Guides. Like every piece of NA literature, this was written by addicts for
addicts. We hope that every member who uses this book will be encouraged and inspired. We are grateful to have been given the opportunity to participate in this project. Thank you for allowing us to be of service. WSC Literature Committee 4 Step One "We admitted we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable." A
"first" of anything is a beginning, and so it is with the steps: The First Step is the beginning of the recovery process. The healing starts here; we can't go any further until we've worked this step. Some NA members "feel" their way through the First Step1 by intuition; others choose to work Step One in a more systematic fashion. Our reasons for
formally working Step One will vary from member to member. It may be that we're new to recovery, and we've just fought-and lost-an exhausting battle with drugs. It may be that we're new to recovery, and we've just fought-and lost-an exhausting battle with drugs. It may be that we're new to recovery, and we've just fought-and lost-an exhausting battle with drugs. It may be that we're new to recovery, and we've just fought-and lost-an exhausting battle with drugs. It may be that we're new to recovery, and we've just fought-and lost-an exhausting battle with drugs.
powerlessness and the unmanageability of our lives once again. Not every act of growth is motivated by pain; it may just be time to cycle through the steps again1 thus beginning the next stage of our never-ending journey of recovery. Some of us find a measure of comfort in realizing that a disease, not a moral failing, has caused us to reach this
bottom. Others don't really care what the cause has been-we just want out! Whatever the case, it's time to do some step work: to engage in some concrete activity that will help us find more freedom from our addiction, whatever shape it is currently taking. Our hope is to internalize the principles of Step One, to deepen our surrender, to make the
principles of acceptance, humility, willingness, honesty, and open-mindedness a fundamental part of who we are. First, we must arrive at a point of surrender ways to do this. For some of us, the road we traveled getting to the First Step was more than enough to convince us that unconditional surrender was our only option.
Others start this process even though we're not entirely convinced that we're addicts or that we're addicts or that we have hit bottom. Only in working the First Step do we truly come to realize that we must surrender. Before we begin working the First Step, we must become abstinent-whatever it takes. If we're new in
Narcotics Anonymous and our First Step is about looking at the effects of drug addiction in our lives, we need to get clean. If we've been clean awhile and our First Step is about our powerlessness over some other behavior that's made our lives, we need to find a way to stop the behavior so that our surrender isn't clouded by
continued acting out. The Disease of Addiction 5 What makes us addicts is the disease of addiction-not the drugs, not our behavior, but our disease. There is something within us that makes us unable to control our use of drugs. This same "something" also makes us prone to obsession and compulsion in other areas of our lives. How can we tell when
our disease is active? When we become trapped in obsessive, compulsive, self-centered routines, endless loops that lead nowhere but to physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional decay. What does "the disease of addiction" mean to me? Has my disease been active recently? In what way? What is it like when I'm obsessed with something? Does my
thinking follow a pattern? Describe. When a thought occurs to me, do I immediately act on it without considering the consequences? In what other ways do I behave compulsively? How does the self-centered part of my disease affect my life and the lives of those around me? How has my disease affected me physically? Mentally? Spiritually?
Emotionally? Our addiction can manifest itself in a variety of ways. When we first come to Narcotics Anonymous, our problem will, of course, be drugs. Later on, we may find out that addiction is wreaking havoc in our lives in any number of ways. What is the specific way in which my addiction has been manifesting itself most recently? Have I been
obsessed with a person, place, or thing? If so, how has that gotten in the way of my relationships with others? How else have I been affected mentally, physically, spiritually, and emotionally by this obsession? Denial benial is the part of our disease that tells us we don't have a disease. When we are unable to see the reality of our
addiction. We minimize its effect. We blame others, citing the too-high expectations of families, friends, and employers. We compare ourselves with other addicts whose addiction seems "worse" than our own. We may blame one particular drug. If we have been abstinent from drugs for some time, we might compare the current manifestation of our
addiction with our drug use, rationalizing that nothing we do today could possibly be as bad as that was! One of the easiest ways to tell that we are in denial is when we find ourselves giving plausible but untrue reasons for my behavior? What have they been? Have I compulsively acted on an
obsession, and then acted as if I had actually planned to act that way? When were those times? How have I compared my addiction with others' addiction if I don't compared my addiction with others addiction with others.
was before I got clean? Am I plagued by the idea that I should know better? Have I been thinking that I have enough information about addiction and recovery to get my behavior under control before it gets out of hand? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Am I avoiding action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction and I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction action because I'm afraid I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction and I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction and I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction and I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction and I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction and I will be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction and I will be ashamed when I will be ashamed when I will be ashamed when I will be ash
worried about what others will think? Hitting Bottom: Despair and Isolation Our addiction finally brings us to a place where we can no longer deny the nature of our problem. All the lies, all the rationalizations, all the illusions fall away as we stand faceto-face with what our lives have become. We realize we've been living without hope. We find we've
become friendless or so completely disconnected that our relationships are a sham, a parody of love and intimacy. Though it may seem that all is lost when we find ourselves in this state, the truth is that we must pass through this place before we can embark upon our journey of recovery. What crisis brought me to recovery? What situation led me to
formally work Step One? When did I first recognize my addiction as a problem? Did I try to correct it? If so, how? If not, why not? Powerlessness As addicts, we react to the word "powerlessness with a sense of
relief. Others recoil at the word, connecting it with weakness or believing it to indicate some kind of character deficiency. Understanding powerlessness - and how admitting our own powerless when the driving force in our
life is beyond our control. Our addiction certainly qualifies as such an uncontrollable, driving force. We cannot moderate or control our drug use or other compulsive behaviors, even when to continue will surely result in irreparable physical damage. We find
ourselves doing things that we would never do if it weren't for our addiction; things that make us shudder with shame when we tried to abstain from drug use or other
compulsive behaviors - perhaps with some success - for a period of time without a program, only to find that our untreated addiction eventually takes us right back to where we were before. In order to work the 7 First Step, we need to prove our own individual powerlessness to ourselves on a deep level. Over what, exactly, am I powerless? I've done
things while acting out on my addiction that I would never do when focusing on recovery. What things have I done to maintain my addiction? (For example: Do I become arrogant? Self-centered? Mean-
tempered? Passive to the point where I can't protect myself? Manipulative? Whiny?) Do I manipulate other people to maintain my addiction? How? Have I quit using and found that I couldn't? Have I quit using on my own and found that my life was so painful without drugs that my abstinence didn't last very long? What were these times like?
How has my addiction caused me to hurt myself or others? Unmanageability The First Step asks us to admit two things: one, that we are powerless over our addiction; and two, that our lives have become unmanageability is the outward evidence of our
powerlessness. There are two general types of unmanageability: outward unmanageability is often identified by such things as arrests, job losses, and family problems. Some of our members have been incarcerated. Some have never been able to
sustain any kind of relationship for more than a few months. Some of us have been cut off from our families, asked never again to contact them. Inner or personal unmanageability is often identified by unhealthy or untrue belief Systems about ourselves, the world we live in, and the people in our lives. We may believe we're worthless. We may believe
that the world revolves around us -not just that it should, but that it should, but that it should do that. We may believe that it sees on as a matter of course are just too large a burden for us to bear. We may over or under react to events in our
lives. Emotional volatility is often one of the most obvious ways in which we can identify personal unmanageability. What does unmanageability mean to me? Have I ever been arrested for if only I was caught? What have those things been? 8 What
trouble have I had at work or school because of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? What trouble have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction?
consideration had on my relationships? Do I accept responsibility for my life and my actions? Am I able to carry out my daily responsibilities without becoming overwhelmed? How has this affected my life? Do I treat every challenge as a personal insult? How
has this affected my life? Do I maintain a crisis mentality, responding to every situation with my health or with my children, thinking things will work out somehow? Describe. When in real danger, have I ever been either indifferent to that danger or
somehow unable to protect myself as a result of my addiction? Describe. Do I have temper tantrums or react to my feelings in other ways that lower my selfrespect or sense of dignity? Describe. Do I have temper tantrums or react to my feelings in other ways that lower my selfrespect or sense of dignity? Describe. Do I have temper tantrums or react to my feelings in other ways that lower my selfrespect or sense of dignity? Describe.
I trying to change or suppress? Reservations Reservations Reservations Reservations are places in our program that we can retain a small measure of control, something like, "Okay, I accept that I can't control my using, but I can still sell drugs, can't I?" Or we may think we can remain friends with the people
we used with or bought drugs from. We may think that certain parts of the program don't apply to us. We may think there's something we just can't face clean-a serious illness, for instance, or the death of a loved one - and plan to use if it ever happens. We may think that after we've accomplished some goal, made a certain amount of money, or been
clean for a certain number of years, then we'll be able to control our using. Reservations are usually tucked away in the back of our minds; we are not fully conscious of them. It is essential that we expose any reservations we may have and cancel them, right here, right now. Have I accepted the full measure of my disease? 9 Do I think I can still
associate with the people connected with my addiction? Can I still go to the places where I used? Do I think it's wise to keep drugs or paraphernalia around, just to "remind myself" or test my recovery? If so, why? Is there something I think I can't get through clean, some event that might happen that will be so painful that I'll have to use to survive the
hurt? Do I think that with some amount of clean time, or with different life circumstances, I'd be able to control my using? What reservations am I still holding on to? Surrender There's a huge difference between resignation and surrender. Resignation is what we feel when we've realized we're addicts but haven't yet accepted recovery as the solution
to our problem. Many of us found ourselves at this point long before coming to Narcotics Anonymous. We may have thought that it was our destiny to be addicts, to live and die in our addiction. Surrender, on the other hand, is what happens after we've accepted the First Step as something that is true for us and have accepted that recovery is the
solution. We don't want our lives to be the way they have been. We don't want to keep feeling. What am I afraid of about the concept of surrender, if anything? What convinces me that I can't use successfully anymore? Do I accept that I'll never regain control, even after a long period of abstinence? Can I begin my recovery
without a complete surrender? What would my life be like if I surrendered completely? Can I continue my recovery without complete surrender. Spiritual Principles In the First Step, we will focus on honesty, open-mindedness, willingness, humility, and acceptance. The practice of the principle of honesty from the First Step starts with admitting the
truth about our addiction, and continues with the practice of honesty on a daily basis. When we say "I'm an addict" in a meeting, it may be the first truly honest thing we've said in a long time. We begin to be able to be honest with ourselves and, consequently, with other people. If I've been thinking about using or acting out on my addiction in some
other way, have I shared it with my sponsor or told anyone else? Have I noticed that, now that I don't have to cover up my addiction, I no longer need to lie like I did? Do I appreciate the freedom that goes along with that? In what ways
have I begun to be honest in my recovery? Practicing the principle of open-mindedness found in Step One mostly involves being ready to believe that there might be another way to live and being willing to try that way. It doesn't matter that we can't see every detail of what that way might be, or that it may be totally unlike anything we've heard about
before; what matters is that we don't limit ourselves or our thinking. Sometimes we may hear NA members saying things that sound totally crazy to us, things like "surrender to win" or suggestions to pray for someone we resent. We demonstrate open-mindedness when we don't reject these things without having tried them. What have I heard in
recovery that I have trouble believing? Have I asked my sponsor or the person I heard say it, to explain it to me? In what ways am I practicing open-mindedness? The principle of willingness contained in the First Step can be practiced in a variety of ways. When we first begin to think about recovery, many of us either don't really believe it's possible
for us or just don't understand how it will work, but we go ahead with the First Step anyway-and that's our first experience with willingness: going to meetings, getting other NA members' phone numbers and calling them. Am I willing to
follow my sponsor's direction? Am I willing to give recovery my best effort? In what ways? The principle of humility, so central to the First Step, is expressed most purely in our surrender. Humility is most easily identified as an acceptance of who we truly are - neither worse nor better than we believed we were
when we were using, just human. Do I believe that I'm a monster who has poisoned the whole world with my addiction? Do I believe that I'm a monster who has poisoned the whole world with my addiction is utterly inconsequential to the larger society around me? Or something in between? Do I have a sense of my relative importance within my circle of family and friends? In society as whole? What is
that sense? How am I practicing the principle of humility in connection with this work on the First Step? To practice the principle of acceptance, we must do more than merely admit that we're addicts. When we accept our addicts. When we accept our addicts.
We come to terms with our addiction, with our recovery, and with the meaning those two realities will come to have in our lives. We don't dread a future of meeting attendance, sponsor 11 contact, and step work; instead, we begin to see recovery as a precious gift, and the work connected with it as no more trouble than other routines of life. Have I
made peace with the fact that I'm an addict? Have I made peace with the things I'll have to do to stay clean? How is acceptance of my disease necessary for my continued recovery? Moving On As we get ready to go on to Step Two, we'll probably find ourselves wondering if we've worked Step One well enough. Are we sure it's time to move on? Have
we spent as much time as others may have spent on this step? Have we truly gained an understanding of this step? Many of us have found it helpful to write about our understanding of Step One? How has my prior knowledge and experience
affected my work on this step? We've come to a place where we see the results of our old way of life and accept that a new way is called for, but we probably don't yet see how rich with possibilities the life of recovery is. It may be enough just to have freedom from active addiction right now, but we will soon find that the void we have been filling with
drugs or other obsessive and compulsive behaviors begs to be filled. Working the rest of the steps will fill that void. Next on our journey toward recovery is Step Two. 12 Step Two We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." Step One strips us of our illusions about addiction; Step Two gives us hope for recovery
The Second Step tells us that what we found out about our addiction in the First Step is not the end of the story. The pain and insanity with which we have been living are unnecessary, says Step Two. They can be relieved and, in time, we will learn to live without them through working the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous. The Second Step fills
the void we feel when we've finished Step One. As we approach Step Two, we begin to consider that maybe, just maybe, there's a Power greater than ourselves-a Power greater than ourselves-a Power greater than ourselves-a Power greater than ourselves implication that we had been
results." We could certainly relate to that! After all, how many times had we tried to get away with something we had never gotten away with something we had never go
Basic Text definition just scratches the surface. Some of us resisted this step because we thought it required us to be religious. Nothing could be further from the truth. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, in the NA program that requires a member to be religious. The idea that "anyone may join us, regardless of... religion or lack of religion" is
fiercely defended by our fellowship. Our members strive to be inclusive in this regard and do not tolerate anything that compromises the unconditional right of all addicts to develop their own individual understanding of a Power greater than themselves. This is a spiritual, not religious, program. The beauty of the Second Step is revealed when we
begin to think about what our Higher Power can be. We are encouraged to choose a Power that is loving, caring, and-most importantly - able to restore us to sanity. The
emphasis is not on who or what this Power is, but on what this Power can do for us. The group itself certainly qualifies as a Power greater than ourselves. So do the spiritual principles contained in the Twelve Steps. And, of course, so does the understanding any one of our individual members has of a Higher Power. As we stay clean and continue to
work this step, we discover that no matter how long our addiction has gone on and how far our insanity has progressed, there's no limit to the ability of a Power greater than ourselves to restore our sanity. 13 Hope The hope we get from working Step Two replaces the desperation with which we came into the program. Every time we had followed
what we'd thought would be a path out of our addiction - medicine, religion, or psychiatry, for instance - we found they only took us so far; none of these was sufficient for us. As we ran out of options and exhausted our resources, we may
have been slightly suspicious when we first came to Narcotics Anonymous, wondering if this was just another method that wouldn't work, or that wouldn't work well enough for us to make a difference. However, something remarkable occurred to us as we sat in our first few meetings. There were other addicts there who had used drugs just as we
had, addicts who were now clean. We believed in them. We knew we could trust the geographic locations, but the hangouts of horror and despair our spirits had visited each time we'd used. The recovering addicts we met in NA knew those places as well as
we did because they had been there themselves. It was when we realized that these other members - addicts like ourselves - were staying clean and finding freedom that most of us first experienced the feeling of hope. We may have been listening to someone share a story just like
our own. Most of us can recall that moment, even years later -and that moment comes to all of us. Our hope is renewed throughout our recovery. Each time something new is revealed to us about our disease, the pain of that realization is accompanied by a surge of hope. No matter how painful the process of demolishing our denial may be, something
else is being restored in its place within us. Even if we don't feel like we believe in anything, we do believe that we can be restored to sanity, even in the most hopeless times, even in our sickest areas. What do I have hope about today? Insanity If we have any doubts about the need for a renewal of sanity in our lives, we're
going to have trouble with this step. Reviewing our First Step should help us if we're having doubts. Now is the time to take a good look at our insanity. Did I believe I could control my using? What were some of my experiences with this, and how were my efforts unsuccessful? What things did I do that I can hardly believe I did when I look back at
them? Did I put myself in dangerous situations to get drugs? Did I behave in ways of which I'm now ashamed? What were those situations like? Did I make insane decisions as a result of my addiction? Did I quit jobs, leave friendships and other relationships, or give up on achieving other goals for no reason other than that those things interfered with
my using? 14 Did I ever physically injure myself or someone else in my addiction? Insanity is a loss of our perspective and our sense of proportion. For example, we may not even be able to consider other people's needs at all. Small problems become major
catastrophes. Our lives get out of balance. Some obvious examples of insane thinking are the belief that we can stay clean on our own, or the belief that using drugs was our only problem and that everything is fine now just because we're clean. In Narcotics Anonymous, insanity is often described as the belief that we can take something outside
ourselves-drugs1 power, sex, food-to fix what's wrong inside ourselves: our feelings. How have I overreacted or underreacted to things? How has my life been out of balance? In what ways does my insanity tell me that things outside myself can make me whole or solve all my problems? Using drugs? Compulsive gambling, eating, or sex seeking?
Something else? Is part of my insanity the belief that the symptom of my addiction (using drugs or some other manifestation) is my only problem? If we've been clean for a while, we may find that a whole new level of denial is making it difficult to see the insanity in our lives. Just as we did in the beginning of our recovery, we need to become familiar
with the ways in which we have been insane. Many of us have found that our understanding of insanity goes further than the definition of insanity in the Basic Text. We make the same mistakes over and over again, even when we're fully aware of what the results will be. Perhaps we're hurting so bad that we don't care about the consequences, or we
figure that acting on an obsession will somehow be worth the price. When we've acted on an obsession, even though we knew what the results would be, what were we feeling and thinking beforehand? What made us go ahead? Coming to Believe The discussion above provided several reasons why we may have trouble with this step. There may be
others. It's important for us to identify and overcome any barriers that could prevent us from coming to believe? What are they? What are the
wanting everything to happen instantly. But it's important to remember that Step Two is a process, not an event. Most of us don't just wake up one day and know that a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity. We gradually grow into this belief. Still, we don't have to just sit back and wait for our belief to grow on its own; we can help it
along.have I ever believed in anything for which I didn't have tangible evidence? What was that experiences have I heard other recovering addicts share about the process of coming to believe? How has my belief grown since I've been in recovery? A Power Greater
Than Ourselves Each one us comes to recovery with a whole history of life experiences. That history will determine to a large degree the kind of understanding we develop of a Power greater than ourselves. In this step, we don't have to have a lot of specific ideas about the nature or identity of that Higher Power. That sort of understanding will come
later. The kind of understanding of a Higher Power that's most important to find in the Second Step is an understanding that works. How powerful does a Power greater than ourselves have to be? The answer to that question is
simple. Our addiction as a negative power was, without a doubt, greater than we were. Our addiction led us down a path of insanity and caused us to act differently than we wanted to behave. We need something at least as powerful as our addiction. Do I have problems accepting that there is a power or powers greater than
myself? What are some things that are more powerful than I am? Can a Power greater than ourselves, and there's absolutely nothing wrong with that. In fact, Step Two is the point at
which many of us begin to form our first practical ideas about a Power greater than ourselves, if we haven't already. Many addicts have found it helpful to identify what a Power greater than ourselves can do for us may help us begin to discover more about
that Power. There are many, many understandings of a Power greater than ourselves that we can develop. We can think of it as the power of spiritual principles, the power of spiritual principles, the power of the NA Fellowship, "Good Orderly Direction," or anything else of which we can conceive, as long as it is loving and caring and more powerful than we are. As a matter of fact, we
don't have to have any understanding at all of a Power greater than ourselves to be able to use that Power to stay clean and seek recovery. What are the characteristics my Higher Power does not have? What are the characteristics my Higher Power has? Restoration to Sanity 16 It
Works: How and Why defines the term "restoration" as "changing to a point where addiction and its accompanying insanity are not controlling our lives when we begin developing a perspective that allows us to make better
decisions. We find that we have choices about how to act. We begin to have the maturity and wisdom to slow down and consider all aspects of a situation before acting. Naturally, our lives will change. Most of us have no trouble identifying the sanity in our lives when we compare our using with our early recovery, our early recovery with some time
clean, and some time clean with long-term recovery. All of this is a process, and our need for a restoration to sanity will change over time. When we're new in the program, being restored to sanity probably means not having to use anymore; when that happens, perhaps some of the insanity that is directly and obviously tied to our using will stop. We'll
quit committing crimes to get drugs. We'll cease putting ourselves in certain degrading situations that serve no purpose but our using. If we've been in recovery for some time, we may find that we have no trouble believing in a Power greater than ourselves that can help us stay clean, but we may not have considered what a restoration to sanity
means to us beyond staying clean. As we grow in our recovery, it's very important that our idea of the meaning of "sanity" also grows. What are some things I consider examples of sanity? In what areas of my life do I need sanity now? How is restoration a process?
How will working the rest of the steps help me in my restoration to sanity? How has sanity already been restored to me in my recovery? Some of us may have unrealistic expectations about being restored to sanity. We may think that we'll never get angry again or that, as soon as we start to work this step, we will behave perfectly all the time and have
no more trouble with obsessions, emotional turmoil, or imbalance in our lives. This description may seem extreme, but if we find ourselves disappointed with our personal growth in recovery or the amount of time it takes to be "restored to sanity," we may recognize some of our beliefs in this description. Most of us have found that we gain the most
serenity by letting go of any expectations we may have about how our recovery is progressing. What expectations do I have about being restored to sanity? Are they realistic, or unrealistic? Are my realistic expectations about how my recovery is progressing being met or not? Do I understand that recovery happens over time, not overnight? 17 Finding
ourselves able to act sanely, even once, in a situation with which we were never able to deal successfully before is evidence of sanity. Have I had any experiences like that in my recovery? What were they? Spiritual Principles In the Second Step, we will focus on open-mindedness, so that it is my recovery? What were they? Spiritual Principles In the Second Step, we will focus on open-mindedness, faith, trust, and humility. The principle of open-mindedness
that we find in the Second Step arises from the understanding that we can't recover alone, that we help is possible for us. It doesn't matter whether we have any idea of how this Power greater than ourselves is going to help, just that we believe it's possible. Why is having a
closed mind harmful to my recovery? How am I demonstrating open-mindedness in my life today? In what ways has my life changed since I've been in recovery? Do I believe more change is possible? Practicing the principle of willingness in the Second Step may begin simply. At first we may just go to meetings and listen to other recovering addicts
share about their experiences with this step. Then we may begin applying what we hear to our own recovery. Of course, we ask our sponsor to guide us. What is it? We can't just sit back and wait to feel a sense of faith when
working Step Two. We have to work at it. One of the suggestions that has worked for many of us is to "act as if" we had faith. This doesn't mean that we should be dishonest with ourselves. We don't need to lie to our sponsor or anyone else about where we are with this step. We're not doing this to sound good or look good. "Acting as if" simply means
living as though we believe that what we hope for will happen. In the Second Step, this would mean living as though we expect to be restored to sanity. There are a variety of ways this may work in our individual lives. Many members suggest that we can begin "acting as if" by going to meetings regularly and taking direction from our sponsor. What
action have I been taking that demonstrates my faith? How has my faith grown? Have I been able to make plans, having faith that my addiction isn't going to get in the way? Practicing the principle of trust may require overcoming a sense of fear about the process of being restored to sanity. Even if we've been clean only a short time, we've probably
already experienced some emotional pain as we've grown in recovery. We may be afraid that there will be more pain. 18 None of it, however, will be more pain. 18 None of it has to be borne alone. If we can develop our sense of trust in the process of recovery and in a Power
greater than ourselves, we can walk through the painful times in our recovery. We'll know that what's waiting on the other side will be more satisfying on a deeper level. What fears do I have that are getting in the way of my trust? What do I need to do to
let go of these fears? What action am I taking that demonstrates my trust in the process of recovery and a Power Greater than ourselves. It's a tremendous struggle for most of us to stop relying on our own thinking and begin to ask for help, but
when we do, we have begun to practice the principle of humility found in the Second Step. Have I sought help from my sponsor, gone to meetings, and reached out to other recovering addicts? What were the results? Moving On As we get ready to go on to Step Three, we'll want to
take a look at what we've gained by working Step Two. Writing about our understanding of each step as we prepare to move on helps us internalize the spiritual principles connected to it. What action can I take that will help me along in the process of coming to believe? What am I doing to work on overcoming any unrealistic expectations I may have
about being restored to sanity? What is my understanding of Step Two? How has my prior knowledge and experience affected my work on this step? As we move on to Step Three, a sense of hope is probably arising within our spirits. Even if we're not just reinforced our knowledge and experience affected my work on this step? As we move on to Step Three, a sense of hope is probably arising within our spirits.
possible but inevitable when we make the effort to work the steps. We can see the possibility of relief from the particular brand of insanity in which we've most recently been gripped by our addiction. We've explored our
insanity and have started to trust a Power greater than ourselves to relieve us from having to continue on the same path. We're beginning to be freed from our illusions. We no longer have to struggle to keep our addiction a secret or isolate ourselves to hide our insanity. We have seen how the program has worked for others, and we have discovered
that it is beginning to work for us as well. Through our newfound faith, we achieve the willingness to move into action and work Step Three. 19 Step Three "We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him." We've worked Steps One and Two with our sponsor-we've surrendered, and we've demonstrated
our willingness to try something new. This has charged us with a strong sense of hope. But if we do not translate our hope into action may terrify
us, especially when we look at what we're deciding to do in this step. Making a decision, any decision, any decision, any decision, by the authorities, or just by default because we didn't want the responsibility of deciding anything for ourselves. When we add to this the
concept of entrusting the care of our will and our lives to something that most of us don't understand at this point, we may just think this whole thing is beyond us and start looking for a shortcut or an easier way to work our programs. These thoughts are dangerous, for when we take shortcuts in our program, we short circuit our recovery. The Third
Step decision may be too big to make in one leap. Our fears of the Third Step, and the dangerous thinking to which those fears lead, can be eased by breaking this step down into a series of smaller, separate hurdles. The Third Step decision doesn't necessarily
mean that we must suddenly, completely change everything about the way we live our lives. Fundamental changes in our lives happen gradually as we work on our recovery, and all such changes require our participation. We don't have to be afraid that this step will do something to us that we're not ready for or won't like. It is significant that this
step suggests we turn our will and our lives over to the God of our understanding. These words are particularly important. By working the Third Step, we are allowing someone or something to care for us, not control us or conduct our lives for us. This step does not suggest that we become mindless robots with no ability to live our own
lives, nor does it allow those of us who find such irresponsibility attractive to indulge such an urge. Instead, we are making a simple decision to change direction, to stop wearing ourselves out trying to make everything happen as if we were in charge of the world. We are accepting
that a Power greater than ourselves will do a better job of caring for our will and our lives than we have. We are furthering the spiritual process of recovery by beginning to explore what we understand the word "God" means. Our
understanding doesn't have to be complex or complete. It doesn't have 20 to be like anyone else's. We may discover that we're very sure what God isn't for us, but not what God is, and that's okay. The only thing that is essential is that we begin a search that will allow us to further our understanding as our recovery continues. Our concept of God will
grow as we grow in our recovery. Working the Third Step will help us discover what works best for us. Making a Decision As we've already discussed, many of us may fear the results or the implied commitment. We may think it's a once-
and-for-all action and fear that we won't do it right or have the opportunity to do it over again. However, the decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of the God of our understanding is one we can make over again. However, the decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of the God of our understanding is one we can make over again.
because of complacency. It is essential that we involve our hearts and spirits in this decision. Though the work necessary to go beyond an intellectual understanding and internalize this choice. Why is making a decision central to working this step? Can I
make this decision just for today? Do I have any fears or reservations about it? What are they? We need to realize that making a decision without following it up with action is meaningless. For example, we can decide one morning to go somewhere and then sit down and not leave our homes for the rest of that day. Doing so would render our earlier
decision meaningless, no more significant than any random thought we may have. What action have I taken to follow through on my decision? What areas of my life are difficult for me to turn over? Why is it important that I turn them over anyway? Self-Will Step Three is critical because we've acted on self-will for so long, abusing our right to make
choices and decisions. So what exactly is self-will? Sometimes it's total withdrawal and isolation. We end up living a very lonely and self-absorbed existence. Sometimes self-will causes us to act to the exclusion of any considerations other than what we want. We ignore the needs and feelings of others. We barrel through, stampeding over anyone who
questions our right to do whatever we want. We become tornadoes, whipping through the lives of family, friends, and even strangers, totally unconscious of the path of destruction we have left behind. If circumstances aren't to our liking, we try to change them by any means necessary to achieve our aims. We try to get our way at all costs. We are so
busy aggressively pursuing our impulses that we completely lose touch with our conscience and with a Higher Power. To work this step, each one of us needs to identify the ways in which we have acted on self-will. How has my self-will affected my life? 
others? Surrendering our self-will doesn't mean we can't pursue goals or try to make changes in our lives and the world. It doesn't mean we have to passively accept injustices to ourselves or to people for whom we're responsible. We need to differentiate between destructive self-will and constructive action. Will pursuing my goals harm anyone? How?
In the pursuit of what I want, is it likely that I will end up doing something that adversely affects myself or others? Explain. Will I have to be dishonest? Cruel? Disloyal?) If we are new in the program and just beginning to work Step Three, we will probably end up
wondering what God's will is for us, thinking that the Eleventh Step, but we don't formally focus our attention on seeking knowledge of our Higher Power's will for us is something we will gradually come to know as we
work the steps. At this point we can come to some very simple conclusions about our Higher Power's will for us to do things that will serve us well for the time being. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean. It is our Higher Power's will for us to stay clean.
the times when my will hasn't been enough. (For example, I couldn't stay clean on my own will.) What is the difference between my will and God's will? At some point in our recovery, we may find that we have somehow shifted from trying to align our will with a Higher Power's to running on self-will. This happens so slowly and subtly that we hardly
even notice. It seems as though we're especially vulnerable to selfwill when things are going well. We cross the fine line that divides humble and honest pursuit of goals from subtle manipulation and forced results. We find ourselves holding on to
something just a little too long. We suddenly realize that we haven't contacted our sponsor in quite a while. We feel a quiet, almost subconscious discomfort that will alert us to this subtle shift away from recovery - if we listen. Have there been times in my recovery when I've found myself subtly taking back my will and my life? What alerted me? What alerted 
have I done to recommit myself to the Third Step? The God of Our Understanding Before we delve deeply into the process of turning our will and our lives over to the Care of the God of our understanding, we should work on overcoming any negative beliefs or unproductive preconceptions we may have about the word "God."
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