

**Step 7 “Humbly asked Him to remove your shortcomings.”**

Principle	Theme	Action	Defect	Result
Humility	Begin work with God	Prayer/Change	False pride	Better behavior; reduced self-will

Purpose	Process	Experience	Result	Promise
Remove or reduce defects of character	Pray the 7 <sup>th</sup> step prayer specifically for the removal of individual defects of character, or prayer for the willingness.	Willingness to pray for the removal of CD, identify, acknowledge; accept; willingness to be responsible and accountable for how it manifests in behavior	Change in behavior	Removal or mitigation of Character Defects

**READINGS FOR STEP SEVEN**

Big Book: Chapter 6, Into Action. Page 76, paragraph 2

AA 12&12: Step 7

**Prayer:** My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.

**Principle:** humility

**Promises:** self-seeking will slip away

Write down your definition of each word in the step. Then look up each word individually in the dictionary and write down what you learn about the difference between what you thought it meant and the dictionary says it means.

What does “humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings” mean to you?

In the Seventh Step, we will focus on the spiritual principles of humility, trust, faith, willingness and surrender.

**Humility**

What is humility?

How can I practice being humble?

What actions have I taken to practice or demonstrate humility?

What is the opposite of humility? (arrogance, false pride, egotism)

Can I think of examples of how I have demonstrated arrogance, false pride and/or egotism?

Can I think of examples of how I have practiced humility and overcome arrogance, false pride and/or egotism?

What is humiliation? What is the difference between humility and humiliation?

Is cultivating humility necessary for recovery? Why or why not?

Is cultivating humility necessary for happiness? Why or why not?

Does humility assist with coping with adversity? If so, how?

Does humility lead to greater faith and trust and a relationship with God? If so, how?

How is humility (55: 4) related to honesty (58: 1) and sanity (5: 5; 37: 1) in regards to my own sense of proportion and perspective?

What does humility have to do with God removing my shortcomings?

Has my attitude towards pain and emotional turmoil changed when I seek to cultivate humility and a relationship with God? If so, how?

In what ways has your attitude toward God changed since you began to work and live the steps on a daily basis?

### **Trust and Faith**

Do I believe that my Higher Power will remove my shortcomings or grant me freedom from the compulsion to act on them?

How does my faith in the God of my understanding become stronger as a result of working this step?

How does being responsible enable me to practice trust?

Do you believe that the chief activator of the acquired character defects has been self-centered fear? What are you doing to eliminate this acquired self-centered fear?

Can I see the many faces of my fear (my defects) and not deny or overlook them?

Read As Bill Sees It pp 22, 61, 75: How has working the 12 steps helped me work through fear?

Pp 139: Discuss and reflect on the act of a) humbly asking God to remove defects and b) having faith that is vital, accompanied by self-sacrifice and unselfish constructive action.

### **Willingness:**

What does it look like in my life when I am willing?

If I am acting grudgingly, am I still practicing the principle of willingness?

What does that look like when I am giving my life over to God?

Are there some areas where I am not willing to give my life over to the care of God?

**Surrender:**

How is the Serenity Prayer (12&12, 41: 0; 125: 2) an expression of Step 7?

How may I accept my powerlessness over my shortcomings as well as over my addiction?  
Please describe.

How may I humbly ask for strength, ask to practice spiritual principles, and ask for humility?

How has my surrender deepened?

How does this step help me accept others?

**Character Defects/Shortcomings:**

Which of my shortcomings have I already identified?

Do I understand what makes each of them a liability?

Are there any shortcomings that I'm not willing to give up at this time? Why not?

Are there some qualities I regard as virtues that others regard as shortcomings?

How will I ask the God of my understanding to remove my shortcomings?

Can my "character" defects ever be useful to God?

What are my "character" defects standing in the way of?

What does it look like in my life when my "character" defects are not standing "in the way"?

Which "character" defects am I asking God to remove?

Does that mean all of "character" defects are going to be removed?

Can I remove my character defects myself?

Do I expect my defects to be removed magically?

What do I do if I make a mistake?

How could we possibly seek to give up a character defect or shortcoming that we fail to recognize as a fault, or cannot admit we possess?

Does God remove all our defects of character that we ask Him to?

**Action Plan:**

Every day write on events where you were afraid to be yourself.

Every day write about events which happened that you accepted and honestly tried to be yourself.

What character defects do you act out on? What spiritual principles might you use instead? For example: Instead of fear and anger, can I respond with love and patience?

Have there been times when I've been able to refrain from acting on a character defect and practice a spiritual principle instead? Do I recognize this as God working in my life?

Can I become more conscious of my motives and intentions before I act?

Today, can I do what the alcoholic in me says, "I don't want to do"?

What Spiritual Awakening did you have as a result of this step?

Which shortcomings have been removed from your life or diminished in their power over you?

### **Questions:**

Discuss: "Our defects are never completely removed, but rather replaced with other attributes (God Given!)."

Discuss: "Humility is our acceptance of who and what we really are, that we are worthwhile, and that we are grateful."

It is curious to note that we ask only for removal of defects of character which stand in the way of our usefulness to God and our fellows. What about the ones which are painful to us?

### **Prayer**

Now, using the seventh step prayer as a guide, humbly ask Him to remove your shortcomings!

What am I praying for?

What exactly does it look like in my life when I am useful to God?

What exactly does it look like in my life when I am useful to "my fellows"?

Exactly what kind of "Strength" (or Power) do I need? (physical, mental, emotional, financial etc.)

Am I: struggling; angry; upset; depressed; grumpy; worried or afraid when I have strength?

What exactly does it look like in my life when God graces me with strength?

Have you thought of making honesty, tolerance and love of God and your fellows the daily basis of living?

Are character-building and spiritual values or material satisfactions the purpose of living? Why or why not?

**References:** Please forgive any omissions!

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