

Your Second Step

A Power Greater than Ourselves

The notion of calling upon a power greater than ourselves to restore sanity to our lives is basic to the Twelve Steps¹. The process of finding out for yourself can be gentle and easy. It is our experience that in the beginning “believing” is theoretical, until supported by the work we do in the following steps. However, in spite of this, in no way should this idea be skipped or minimized.

This step is not a question that requires a particular religion. It does not matter whether you are Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Jewish or not of a religion at all. Whether you are a non-theist, a monotheist, or polytheist is not the issue. Anyone is capable of prayer. Anyone is capable of acknowledging that their life is unmanageable and that they need assistance.. It is not a question of whether there is a God, or Gods (for those of different beliefs). It simply asks us to consider a power greater than ourselves that can have an effect in our lives.

Or, do we have to do it all alone? Doing it alone is a formidable dilemma.

Questions to Ask

1. Do you like the results that you have been getting on your own in life, with no inclusion of a power greater than yourself? _____
2. Consider whether a power greater than yourself can have an effect in your life. (Or, do you have to do it all alone?)

¹The Twelve Steps are originally listed in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 71 and 72, first edition

3. Will this God play a role in your life? _____

4. If your answer is “Perhaps there is this power.” What do you think you do about it? Again, will this God play a role in your life?

5. If you don’t particularly like the results that *you* have been getting, and if there is perhaps a power greater than yourself that could personally intervene in your life, why not consider letting this force for goodness, or God, have a little cooperation from you and play a bigger part in your life?

We are not answering the question whether there is a God or not, or whether it is a force of goodness. The pertinent question for us is, “If there is a God, what do we do about it? Will this God play a role in my life?”

A sensible answer will come when we consider, “Do I like the results that I have been getting on my own?” If I don’t particularly like the results that *I* have been getting, then consider this alternative. “If there is the possibility of a power greater than myself that could intervene on my current existence, why don’t I consider letting this force for goodness, or God, have a little cooperation from me and play a bigger part in my life?”

If we can concede that “Perhaps there is a power,” the proof or the evidence that we need for this power will be supported by our experience of integrating this power in the ensuing steps and in our life. “Perhaps” is enough to go forward with assimilating this idea of a power greater than myself into my life.

Spiritual people may never question whether there is a power out there in the universe that is greater than themselves, a power that intervenes directly into human life. Many who come to this form have never faced that question.

For some of us it is a very uncomfortable idea given the kind of behavior we have exhibited in life and our prior conception of God. We might think that if there is a God in Heaven, given the way that we have lived, we are in real trouble.

Whatever answer we come up with, at least initially, our answer is going to be speculative. At best our answer is going to be “perhaps.”

We suppose that this step also implies that there is something wrong with our perception of reality. The implication is that this perception has been insane. The word “insane” is not easy to personally accept. We can admit that we have had some bad judgment, but *insane*?!

Insane means “irrational, unreasonable,” as in living in a reality other than the one that exists. As we continue in the steps, especially in the steps following our self survey inventory writing, it is easier to see our irrational or unreasonable behavior.

Just given the problems we have in our life that are out of control, we can continue with this step by entering into the action of asking and turning to this power for goodness, or God, if you wish. By doing this action, we find that we enter a dimension of living which never existed before for us.

We would like to stress the idea of continuing on to the next step, and accepting that the answers will be revealed to us as we continue trying to do the following steps, and turning to this power greater than ourselves for any help we need.

Our commitment is that no one find the 12-Steps, walk away and die. They can find the life-transforming miracle they are looking for through the beauty of the Twelve Steps. This is the principle the International Step Foundation stands upon as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) public educational charity.

We serve two categories of people: those in 12-Step programs wishing a clearer understanding of the Twelve Steps as an enhancement to their 12-Step program, and those people who are sincerely interested in changing their life and altering their current course of existence. For both groups we offer clear and understandable input and suggestions for embracing the Twelve Steps as a way of life.

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