

# Sponsor/Sponsee Third Step Work Sheet

*We made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood him*

This step has often been referred to as the stumbling block of recovery. Many of us just get stuck here and cannot seem to move on. The reason for this is that, as addicts, we like to take something simple and complicate it, but it does not have to be that way, if we become willing and open-minded. Now with that in mind, let's look at this step, beginning with the word decision. What is a decision? A decision is an action word, a beginning or starting point. Looking at it from a point of recovery, it is the time we let go of our old attitudes and let the steps begin to build new attitudes, in our lives, as we make mistakes and grow in spiritual principles. As you can see, being willing and open-minded is very important as far as the decision in the Third Step is concerned. Simply put, a decision is accepting this step into our lives.

The next part of the step we must look at is *to turn our will and our lives*. We must ask ourselves, what does the step mean by our will and our lives? Our *wills* are our way of doing things. We want to fix things to the way we want them to be, no matter who it hurts or destroys. This comes from the core of our disease, self-centeredness. There is only one power that can destroy self-centeredness and that is spirituality. We are now beginning to build spirituality into our lives; we will get a realization of its strength and power in the Eleventh Step. Our *lives* simply mean our day-to-day affairs, our problems, our worries, and our pain.

Now let's look at the words *over to the care of God as we understood Him*. Many of us could not or would not relate to that word God. By the time we reached NA, many of us were Atheist or Agnostic and some of us had a God who was vengeful. We will need to practice honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness. The type of honesty we are talking about here is self-honesty. We must be honest enough to admit that there is a power that is higher than ourselves. It does not matter what that power is. The program tells us it is God as we understood him. It does not have to be a God of someone else's belief, but a God of your belief. This is where much confusion comes from in the program. As addicts, sometimes we try to push our God and our beliefs about Him onto other addicts.

I have heard some addicts tell another addict to get down on his knees to pray to God, without even knowing if that is the God of that addict's understanding. The important thing to remember is that it is a God of your understanding. It could be the God of your childhood, a force, nature, some kind of intelligence or just a rock in the backyard. It is a Higher Power you and you alone can have Faith in. You relate and pray to your Higher Power according to the way you understand Him. The Higher Power you have today may change during ongoing recovery and that's OK; it's your Higher Power.

Now let's talk about *over to the care of*. One mistake we make when we do not understand this step is that we say *turn it over to God*. We leave out the word care. Without the word care we change the entire meaning of the step. Let me give you an example of this: It's Saturday night. You and your wife/husband are going out for the night and have a child. You do not turn your child over to a baby-sitter, but you turn your child over *to the care of* a baby-sitter

to watch and guide. When we turn our will and lives over to the care of God we do this not to become robots or carbon copies of each other, but to have a Higher Power of our understanding to watch and guide our will and lives.

The question has been asked many times. What is Gods will for me? The answer is simple. Gods will for us is to act mature and responsible, to the best of our ability, at whatever point of our recovery we are at. Gods will for us grows, as we grow. If we act mature and responsible to the best of our ability, the outcome of our situation will be as mature and responsible as it can be, at that point of recovery. Now, when we turn our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him, one of two things will happen. Let's look at what these two things are:

1. If we are living the first three steps in our lives on all things, in other words, we are living mature and responsible; our Higher Power will work things out for us.
2. If we are not living the first three steps in our lives, our Higher Power will allow us to feel the consequences of our actions, so we can learn from them, so we can act mature and responsible.

When we first came into the program of Narcotics Anonymous we were physically, mentally, and spiritually bankrupt. We got clean in this order:

1. physically
2. mentally
3. spiritually

First we stopped using drugs. Then our minds began to clear up, as the fog lifted and we could start to think a little clearer. Then our spirits began to heal as we started to treat ourselves better. The first step restored us physically. The second step restored us mentally. And, the third step restores us spiritually. We must maintain vigilance over these three aspects of our disease. If we neglect our recovery and lose focus, if we do not pay attention to the progress of our disease; we will stop growing spiritually. Then, we will think we are cured and not need to be restored to sanity. Then, all that is left is the physical, the act of picking up drugs again. That is why it is so important to live these steps in our lives; they are the maintenance part of our program.

If you have no Higher Power try **Good Orderly Direction**.

One last thing we will talk about is the relationship, of the Serenity Prayer, to the first three steps. Once we realize the connection between the two, the Serenity Prayer becomes a powerful tool in our lives. Let us take a look at it: the first part is *the serenity to accept the things I cannot change*. Remember, **acceptance** is the spiritual principle behind the first step. The second part is *courage to change the things I can* or doing things differently to change the outcome from insane results. And *the wisdom to know the difference*, in the Third Step, is doing the mature and responsible thing, not our will.

Write about the following on a separate paper to go over with your sponsor:

1. What is a decision?

2. How did I make my decision?
3. What is my will? What is my life?
4. How do I turn my will and my life over to the care of God?
5. Why is it OK to have a different Higher Power than other addicts?
6. Why do I have to live the first three steps in my life?
7. What are the three phases of relapse?
8. How can the Serenity Prayer help me in my life?
9. Why is being abstinent, without living the steps, dangerous?
10. How did others help you come to the point of making a decision?
11. Who or what made your decisions for you while using? List 3
12. Who or what made your decisions for you while in recovery? List 3
13. Who managed your life while using? List 3
14. Who manages your life in recovery? List 3
15. In the dictionary, look up and write out the definition of *decision*.
16. What do the words *over to the care of* mean to you?
17. In the dictionary, look up and write out the definition of *care*.
18. What was your relationship with God like before coming to NA?
19. What are the 3 characteristics needed for *a God of our understanding*?
20. Write out in detail what you believe to be your Higher Power.
21. Write out 3 times you felt God's presence in recovery and 3 times while using.
22. Write out 24 things that you have to be grateful for today.

Spiritual Principle: Faith/Belief