

SURVIVAL

AA tradition states that working Steps 1 – 3 is about our survival.

-

Steps 2 – 3

Studying the Steps is not the same as taking the Steps. In the "Beginners' Classes" you take the steps. The Big Book says, "Here are the steps we took" not "here are the steps we read and talked about." The AA pioneers proved that action, not knowledge, produced the spiritual awakening that resulted in recovery from alcoholism or addiction.

Big Book Sponsorship Guide
4-Hour 12 Steps

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

Introduction to Steps 2 and 3

The goal of the first Step was to end the denial, the absurd notion that we live normal lives. To admit powerless and unmanageability is to cross the threshold from delusion to reality. It is the first step, literally, on a path to sanity and wholeness.

This hopefulness is the heart and soul of the First Step Prayer. Let us take a moment to consider one of its many forms.

Dear Lord,

I admit that I am powerless over my addiction.

I admit that my life is unmanageable when I try to control it.

Help me this day to understand the true meaning of powerlessness.

Remove from me all denial of my addiction.

Necessary as it is, ending our denial changes nothing.

Realizing we must change our destructive behavior is not the same thing as changing it.

It is the “ticket” to take the journey but it is not the journey.

Step 1 is the promise of change.

Step 2 and Step 3 clear the cluttered mind, attend to our soul, and prepare us for recovery in Steps 4 through 9.

Said another way, in Step 1 we admit, “*We cannot.*”

In Step 2, we open ourselves up to the possibility a Power outside ourselves can end our insanity, “*Our Higher Power can.*”

In Step 3, we choose, even if tenuously, to engage this Higher Power to care for and mend our broken spirit. “*We let It.*”

Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2

What Is Step 2? (Our Higher Power can.)

Write Step 2 from memory:

If you have not committed it to memory, stop now. Memorize it.

It makes no sense for you to try to work a Step if you do not know what it says.

This is no time for half-measures.

Remember what is at stake.

Find someone in the Retreat to help you memorize it. This should take all of five (5) minutes.

Write Step 2 from memory

Continue when you have it memorized.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

What Is Step 2 Asking?

To be effective, this manual must be used in combination with dedicated reading of recovery literature. If you have not already done so, take a moment to read Step 2 in the *SAA Green Book*, the *AA Big Book*, and the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of AA* (usually referred to as the *Twelve and Twelve*).

Write Step 2:

Draw a circle around the words you think are the most important in Step 2. Be prepared to discuss why you selected them. What in this Step will you find the most difficult or challenging? Why? Discuss this with someone at the retreat.

Keeping the words you circled in mind, what is the Step asking you to do? Please write this out.

Discuss this with your facilitator.

Recall earlier when we learned the first program consisted of only 6 Steps.

<http://hindsfoot.org/steps6.html>

1. Complete deflation.
2. ***Dependence and guidance from a Higher Power.***
3. Moral inventory.
4. Confession.
5. Restitution.
6. Continued work with other alcoholics.

From our vantage point, the original Step 2 morphed into our modern Steps 2 and 3. But why was it necessary to break them apart? Why did Step 2 have to be a Step all by itself? Discuss this with others at the retreat.

In Step 1 we admitted we could not recover on our own. Step 2 builds on this confession by inviting us to look outside of ourselves for a Power that can heal us of our madness.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

Higher Power and the Agnostic or Atheist

If you are agnostic or an atheist, talking about a Higher Power can be off-putting and uncomfortable. Please let me explain how working Step 2 will not violate your beliefs.

It might sound like splitting hairs but there is a BIG difference between believing in the existence of a power greater than you and believing in a God of the universe.

Paul V. is a member of Raleigh SAA recovery community. He offered these wonderful and insightful comments that explain this difference.

Going on to Steps 2, I myself found a good deal of insight in Bill W's memory of what to say to the new member who identified himself as either an atheist or an agnostic. I can't remember the exact words, but it was something like: okay, never mind God, can you admit that there could be something more powerful than you? Getting him to say yes to that question, Bill W maintained, was "all we needed." Even if – to some – "God" is just shorthand for "Group Of Drunks," taking Step 2 involves the same sort of stepping away from the day-to-day that Step 1 did:

- 1. I admit that I can't fix this myself; I surrender.*
- 2. There could be a power greater than myself out there somewhere; and*
- 3. Maybe that power could fix me – **something** seems to be helping all these guys around here.*

I've come to understand that this kind of "stepping back" and seeing myself with a kind of objectivity is also helpful for those who do believe in God. C. B. once said that, in retrospect, it wasn't that he didn't believe in God, it was that he didn't believe that God believed in him. It's here that the 12 Step group is at its most powerful: a bunch of guys who are honest about the addiction and its horrible consequences, who are finding help. If God or whatever mysterious higher power can help them, maybe He/It can help me.

"Coming to believe ..." is a lifelong process. Do not let that fact intimidate you.

Avoid the trap that perfectionism always sets. You will not get it "right" the first time – or ever, really.

"Come to believe ..." is an evolution, a tiny, daily metamorphosis. Coming to believe a little more today than yesterday is all that is required.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

What Does a Good Step 2 Look Like?

At its core, addiction is a disease of the spirit, a corruption of our best nature. Sexual addiction takes the most lovingly tender act and turns it into a mockery of intimacy. In order to treat ourselves and other people as if we were only objects, we first have to deny our spiritual side. We ignore our inner *longing* to be known, loved, accepted, and we settle for mere touch. A large part of our guilt comes from understanding ***we are not things; we are human beings.***

You do not have to believe in a Higher Power to accept this simple fact.

If our spirit is corrupted then it is our spirit which must be healed. Step 2 shows us how to start.

A good Step 2 has two parts.

The first is an evaluation of the action required to perform Step 2, an examination of the insanity of addiction, being open to the idea a loving power exists that can restore us to sanity and what is required to maintain that open-mindedness.

The second part of Step 2 calls us to adopt the principles of hope, humility, acceptance, trust, and willingness in our everyday life. To avoid reducing this to a mere intellectual effort, the work must include self-defined metrics that can be used daily to assess how well we practice these principles.

Regardless of your approach, try to keep this in mind as you write.

It does not matter what this Power looks like, only that:

- **It is greater than you.**
- **It loves you.**
- **It can restore you to sanity.**

Step 2 invites us to grow as people by moving away from a Me-centered Universe to one where our chief responsibility is to practice certain principles in service to others. These Step 2 principles are:

- **Hope**
- **Willingness**
- **Faith**
- **Trust**
- **Humility**

How do you define these principles? How can you use these principles to work Step 2?
What can you begin to do ***now*** to invoke these principles in your life?

Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2

Next, we will review some of the different approaches to working this Step. As you will see, they differ in style but not in purpose.

This is a good time to remind you of something very important.

Step work is difficult because the Program insists that we confront, examine, reveal, and ultimately understand the very things we used sex to numb or forget.

Do not underestimate the power of the pain you have forgotten.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

Different Ways to Write Step 2

Read the *SAA Green Book's* **and** the *AA Twelve and Twelve* discussions of Step 2 twice and discuss it with your facilitator. If you get the chance, bring it up in a discussion.

This is especially effective when your reading is combined with prayer and/or meditation.

We discuss three related but distinct ways to work Step 2.

Each will be described in greater detail.

- A systematic analysis of the language of the Step.
- A question guided self-examination. (Not included with this workbook. Please consult your facilitator).
- A Step 2 prayer written by you.

Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2

A Systematic Analysis of the Language

This approach asks that we break the Step down into its component parts and evaluate what the separate, individual parts mean to us. As we proceed from one key phrase or word to the next, deep truths are revealed, widening our appreciation for the ideas contained in the language. The exercise concludes with a final declaration about our reaction to this deeper understanding of the Step.

This process is often used to gain wisdom from Scripture. An analysis of a psalm, for example, would critically examine every important word or phrase in that psalm, the goal being to unearth from within the Scripture that buried treasure of wisdom which only deep reflection and study can yield

Step 2 is not Scripture but when we apply the method, the results can be as extraordinary as any found in theology. We come to understand the Step, identify what stands in the way of our doing what the Step asks, and then overcome those barriers.

If we examine the Step's principles under the same light their relationship to the action required is similarly enhanced.

This technique is best explained by an incomplete example using a table that breaks down the words of the Step.

You can complete it as an exercise if you are working this Step. The table consists of three columns.

The first is the key word or phrase. The Step can be divided in many ways. Discuss with your facilitator how to separate the phrases in the Step. You are free to break the wording down into an arrangement that makes most sense to you. It is helpful to ask others to help you chose a different arrangement.

The second column contains your definitions of the words or phrases, its connotations as well as its denotations. This helps us peel back the many layers of meaning of each phrase or idea.

In the third column you write down your reactions to each part of the Step, how it inspires or challenges you. What stands in the way of your taking the action this Step asks? How can you overcome the inertia to change?

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

Exegesis of Step 2

Step 2	What this word or phrase means to me.	Interpretation
<i>Came</i>	A migration; a transformation, a journey, an evolution.	My addiction is destroying my life. I saw that clearly in Step 1. I know I have to change. I have always known it but I have always been afraid of what that would take. I do not want to give up my addiction because I am selfish. How can I change if I do not want to? Is it pride that is standing in my way? Or is it fear? It's both I think. Am I ready to give up fear and to try humility? I need to have faith this journey is possible, and I need to humbly admit I must make this migration. I can do this.
<i>To believe</i>	A demonstrated inner conviction or faith in something or someone.	I see that fear and pride keep me from changing. Is that the only thing holding me back? I have this sense that I do not believe change is possible for me. I have tried and tried and always failed. How will this be different? Here is where Step 2 asks me to have faith. What have I got to lose?
<i>A Power</i>	Energy. Source of wisdom, strength, hope. A superior restorative agent. An authority over a dominion.	In order for me to move forward, I need energy to do it. I lack such energy on my own to take the necessary steps and actions to getting healthy. This energy is not just motivation. It is also a wisdom, strength, and hope that provide the tools and foundation needed to actually act.
<i>Greater than myself</i>	Knowing more than I do. Wiser than I am. Stronger than I am. Kinder than I am. More patient than I am. More loving than I am. Calmer than I am.	If I could overcome my addiction alone, I would have done it alone. I do not have the knowledge, wisdom, strength, compassion, and love I need to find sobriety on my own. I need something outside of myself to provide these things that I have not been able to find or provide for myself.
<i>Could restore me</i>	Put me back together. Make me whole. Heal me.	Even if I was young at the time, I was whole once in my life. I can be whole again.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

<i>To sanity</i>	Being of sound, rational, and healthy mind	I can work and grow to see the world through clear eyes, thinking with a clear mind, free of fantasy and harmful behavior
<i>Open-mindedness</i>	Capable of taking in, interpreting, understanding, and even acting on ideas outside of my own	I practice open-mindedness by allowing <i>for the possibility</i> of a Power greater than I. I do not need to know what it is nor how it works – only that it might exist.
<i>Willingness</i>	Capable of devoting the time, energy, emotion, and thought to a particular action or goal	I practice willingness by working the Step(s) as written, withholding nothing of myself. I will push against the fear and commit myself to try this new way of being.
<i>Faith</i>	Capable of believing in something beyond one’s own understanding of the world	I practice faith by believing in a Higher Power of my own choosing, accepting that it is beyond my comprehension or intellect to completely understand this power’s nature or composition.
<i>Trust</i>	Capable of relying on the strength, wisdom, and love that someone provides, even ourselves	I practice trust by relying the collective wisdom, strength, love, and hope that this program and its fellowship provides to me.
<i>Humility</i>	Capable of accepting one’s own limitations and defects without shame	I practice humility by maintaining rigorous honesty as I work the Steps and asking for help when I need it, whether it be from my Higher Power or the fellowship of the program.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

A Question Guided Self-examination

This method is popular across the spectrum of 12 Step programs and shares many of the same features despite differences in programs. All programs that use a self-examination guidebook address each Step individually.

The guidebook combines the discussions in the *AA Twelve and Twelve* with material specific to that Program. The result is a recommended template to be worked by a sponsor and sponsee.

Each Step has its own section which is a combination of descriptive narrative and questions the sponsor asks the newcomer about his / her life as an addict.

The narrative section discusses the Step, explains what it means, and then describes what that specific Step program (NA, AA, etc.) believes is the best way to work the Step. The narrative goes on to anticipate the common objections newcomers have to working the Step and overcomes those objections with reason and compassion.

The guidebook anticipates the newcomer's internal resistance to change and also identifies the common character flaws that underlie the resistance, pointing out how they keep addicts enslaved to addiction. Some examples help to clarify this approach. 'What does my addict tell me I get from acting out? What do I actually get from acting out? Why I am afraid to even try to change?'

The narrative helps the sponsor guide the sponsee to realize that change is possible and the worth it.

Lastly, the guidebook juxtaposes the common and destructive defects of character with their opposite, life-affirming principles: Greed v. Generosity or Pride v. Humility. With each Step, the addict is asked to adopt a (slightly different) set of virtues into their daily lives. Doing so – even if it means faking it until the addict makes it - is the goal of the Steps.

Your facilitator will help you if you decide to use this method.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

Write Your Own Step 2 Prayer

There are many ways of expressing our commitment to this Step, of showing that we ‘worked it’ but few are as powerful and concrete as writing a prayer to God that we then memorize and recite daily.

Part meditation, part conversation, a prayer is an intimate act of surrender and can be a plea for help in times of trouble or a celebration of a personal victory.

If you decide to write a private prayer, remember it should express your true convictions, (religious beliefs, and / or personal convictions) and demonstrate all of the principles the Step asks us to put into practice.

These are 2 examples to get you started.

Step 2 Prayer

My Higher Power,

I pray for an open mind so I may come to believe in a Power greater than myself.

I pray for humility and the continued opportunity to increase my faith.

I do not want to be crazy any more.

Alternative Prayer

Heavenly Father,

I know in my heart that only you can restore me to sanity.

I humbly ask that you remove all twisted thought and addictive behavior from me this day.

Heal my spirit and restore in me a clear mind.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

What Is Step 3? (*We let It.*)

Write Step 3 from memory:

If you have not committed it to memory, stop now. Memorize it.

It makes no sense for you to try to work a Step if you do not know what it says.

This is no time for half-measures.

Remember what is at stake.

Find someone at the Retreat to help you memorize it. This should take all of five (5) minutes.

Write Step 3 from memory

Continue when you have it memorized.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

What Is Step 3 Asking?

To be effective, this manual must be used in combination with dedicated reading of recovery literature. If you have not already done so, take a moment to read Step 3 in the *SAA Green Book*, the *AA Big Book*, and the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of AA* (usually referred to as the *Twelve and Twelve*).

Write Step 3:

Draw a circle around the words you think are the most important in Step 3. Be prepared to discuss why you selected them. What in this Step will you find the most difficult or challenging? Why? Discuss this with someone at the Retreat.

Keeping the words you circled in mind, what is the Step asking you to do? Please write this out.

_____ Discuss this with
your facilitator.

Recall earlier when we learned the first program consisted of only 6 Steps.

<http://hindsfoot.org/steps6.html>

1. Complete deflation.
2. ***Dependence and guidance from a Higher Power.***
3. Moral inventory.
4. Confession.
5. Restitution.
6. Continued work with other alcoholics.

In the last section you studied why Step 2 had to be separated from Step 3. This time, I want you to consider why Step 3 had to be distinct from Step 2. If you have not had a chance to do so yet, please discuss this with your facilitator.

In Step 1 we admitted we could not recover on our own. Step 2 invited us to be open-minded and to look outside of ourselves for a loving and caring power that could restore us to sanity. In Step 3 we take a leap of faith and make a conscious decision to surrender our daily struggle to the care of this Power outside ourselves.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

What Does a Good Step 3 Look Like?

If, at its core, addiction is a disease of the spirit, surely its surface manifestation is profound isolation. We do not mean being alone and away from people although for many addicts that is exactly what occurs. We mean the voluntary avoidance of genuinely intimate connections with people. Addicts avoid closeness because our addiction tells us we will be rejected if we are known. People will reject us because we are awful people

Addicts learn to hide in plain sight of dozens of people, even while interacting with them. We are surrounded by good people - family or friends who care for us - yet we make the conscious decision to starve ourselves of intimacy.

Through the lens of our self-hatred we imagine an uncaring and unloving Universe that is out to get us. We isolate ourselves from God and deny ourselves healing mercy because we believe a Higher Power would only accuse, condemn and judge us.

The burden is just as heavy for the atheist or agnostic who deprive themselves of the care and affirmation they need to “belong” to their family of choice. Isolation starves the believer, the non-believer, and the doubter alike.

Step 2 challenged us to imagine a Power outside of ourselves, one that loves and cares for us deeply enough to restore us to sanity. Now Step 3 calls us to faithful action by asking that we trust this ever patient outside Power, this God of endless second chances.

A good Step 3:

Evaluates the action required, in this case to make a decision, to act on that decision, and, ultimately, to surrender our will and our lives to the care of our healing Higher Power. Some discussion should be focused on the order of action (i.e., what difference would it make if we surrendered “our lives” first and “our will” second?) Is there a defeat implicit in surrender? Also what is the difference between God’s will and our own?

*Reflects on the principles of **Faith**, Surrender, Willingness, Hope, Trust, and Commitment. What are the opposite defects of character? Most of us practice these virtues occasionally but what stops us from adopting them full time? As in Step 2, the work should include self-defined metrics that can be used daily to assess how well we practice these principles.*

Try to keep this in mind as you write.

- **We make this decision with our hearts as well as our minds.**
- **What have we got to lose?**
- **There is great strength in “Acting as if.”**

Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2

Next, we will review some of the different approaches to working this Step. As was the case with Step 2, the approaches differ only in style. The purpose is the same in each of them.

Remember:

Step work is difficult because the Program insists that we confront, examine, reveal, and ultimately understand the very things we used sex to numb or forget.

You will resist taking this Step but do not yield to that resistance.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

Different Ways to Work Step 3

Read the *SAA Green Book* and the *AA Twelve and Twelve's* discussion of Step 3 twice before discussing it with your facilitator. Bring it up as a topic for discussion at one of the gatherings.

We will use the same techniques to work Step 3 as we did Step 2.

The methods are:

- A systematic analysis of the language of the Step.
- A question guided self-examination.
- A Step 3 prayer written by you.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

A Systematic Analysis of the Language

To review, the exegetic method directs that we break the Step down into its component parts and evaluate what the separate, individual parts mean to us. As we proceed from one key phrase or word to the next, deep truths are revealed, widening our appreciation for the ideas contained in the language. The exercise concludes with a final declaration about our reaction to this enriched understanding of the Step.

The table consists of three columns.

The first is the key word or phrase. The Step can be divided in many ways. Discuss with your facilitator how to separate the phrases in the Step. You are free to break the wording down into an arrangement that makes most sense to you. It is helpful to ask others to help you chose a different arrangement.

The second column contains your definitions of the words or phrases, its connotations as well as its denotations. This helps us peel back the many layers of meaning of each phrase or idea.

In the third column you write down your reactions to each part of the Step, how it inspires or challenges you. What stands in the way of your taking the action this Step asks? How can you overcome the inertia to change?

Do not settle for the easy, pat answers of the past. View yourself as your Higher Power does - with care, love, and forgiveness.

From this humble perspective you can be honest about your unwillingness and fearfulness. Unwillingness confessed is more readily overcome. Fearfulness expressed loses its hold on us when it is named.

Honesty is oxygen to the program, the atmosphere that sustains us. The more honest you are in your daily interactions with others as well as in your internal conversations with yourself, (self-talk) the deeper your soul can breathe.

Finally, you come to understand the Step, why taking it is necessary for your healing, and how it furthers your journey to full recover.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

Exegesis of Step 3

Step 3	What this word or phrase means to me.	Interpretation
<i>Made a decision</i>	A conscious effort to invest oneself in one particular direction over another one.	I have decided to invest myself in this program in an effort to find sobriety, rather than continue on a path of harm and denial
<i>To turn</i>	Yielding or surrendering something to someone or something else.	Since I am not able to bear my burdens alone, nor foster my own development, I must turn it over my sole custody of these features to something else.
<i>My will and</i>	A person's system for making decisions and acting on them.	I have not made healthy or fulfilling decisions in acting on my own will, so I must find some other guide for my will.
<i>My life</i>	The sum of a person's interactions with the world, their experiences from those interactions, and the results of those interactions, and experiences.	I have not led a healthy or fulfilling life on my own, so I must find some other guide for my life.
<i>Over to</i>	Transferring something from one entity to another	It is not enough to simply take what I need from outside sources and incorporate them into my will and my life. I must completely turn them over in order to motivate genuine and significant change in both.
<i>The care of</i>	The maintenance or improvement of quality and integrity	I must have faith that I am turning over my will and life to something that will be loving and caring for both in a way that I was not able to do alone.
<i>God</i>	A Higher Power	I must have faith that God, as I have defined God, will provide the love and care that my will and life require.
<i>Surrender</i>	Capable of yielding authority and control to another entity	I practice surrender when I act on the collective wisdom, strength, and hope of the program and my Higher Power without resistance, negativity, or cynicism.
<i>Willingness</i>	Capable of devoting the time, energy, emotion, and thought to a particular action or goal	I practice willingness by working the Step(s) as written, withholding nothing of myself. I will push against the fear and commit myself to trying this new way of being.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

<i>Hope</i>	Capable of continuing forward with a positive and constructive outlook, even in light of setbacks or failure	I practice hope by looking to my brothers and my Higher Power for support, love, and wisdom at times when I feel myself in doubt or darkness.
<i>Faith</i>	Capable of believing in something beyond one's own understanding of the world	I practice faith by believing in a Higher Power of my own choosing, accepting that it is beyond my comprehension or intellect to completely understand this power's nature or composition.
<i>Trust</i>	Capable of relying on the strength, wisdom, and love that someone provides, even ourselves	I practice trust by relying the collective wisdom, strength, love, and hope that this program and its fellowship provides to me.
<i>Commitment</i>	Capable of staying invested in a particular process or environment, even in light of setbacks and difficulty	I practice commitment by setting regular and reasonable goals for myself in working the program and then taking all necessary action to complete those goals.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

A Question Guided Self-examination

This method is popular across the spectrum of 12 Step programs and shares many of the same features despite differences in programs. All programs that use a self-examination guidebook address each Step individually.

The guidebook combines the discussions in the *AA Twelve and Twelve* with material specific to that Program. The result is recommended template to be worked by a sponsor and sponsee.

Each Step has its own section which is a combination of descriptive narrative and questions the sponsor asks the newcomer about his / her life as an addict.

The narrative section discusses the Step, explains what it means, and then describes what that specific Step program (NA, AA, etc.) believes is the best way to work the Step. The narrative goes on to anticipate the common objections newcomers have to working the Step and overcomes those objections with reason and compassion.

The guidebook anticipates the newcomer's internal resistance to change and also identifies the common character flaws that underlie the resistance, pointing out how they keep addicts enslaved to addiction. Some examples help to clarify this approach. 'What does my addict tell me I get from acting out? What do I actually get from acting out? Why I am afraid to even try to change?'

The narrative helps the sponsor guide the sponsee to realize that change is possible and the worth it.

Lastly, the guidebook juxtaposes the common and destructive defects of character with their opposite, life-affirming principles: Greed v. Generosity or Pride v. Humility. With each Step, the addict is asked to adopt a (slightly different) set of virtues into their daily lives. Doing so – even if it means faking it until the addict makes it - is the goal of the Steps.

Your facilitator will help you if you decide to use this method.

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

Write Your Own Step 3 Prayer

Some addicts come to the program bearing the wounds of their religious upbringing.

Others come to the program comfortably fluent in the doctrine of their faith.

Addicts in this latter group may want to build on their existing spiritual foundation by incorporating it into Step work.

This merger of the addict's existing beliefs with the spirituality the Program advocates requires prayer, reflection, and soul-searching discussions. A sponsor should take part in these discussions but the addict should also consider engaging her priest, pastor, rabbi, imam or other trusted spiritual advisor to insure her Step work is congruent with her faith.

A concrete manifestation of this effort may well be a personally authored Step 3 prayer. Such writing would express the addict's true convictions and demonstrate all of the principles the Step calls us to adopt.

Of course, an addict may combine this approach with any of the approaches previously described.

We ask you to consider the following instructive and insightful quotation.

How often, like the disciples, do the times of cowardice, boasting, and fear come from the fact that we don't know or don't believe that, like a child in the lap of God, there simply is no longer any basis for insecurity?

*Nadia Bolz-Weber, Pastor
House for All Sinners and Saints*

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

Sample Step 3 Prayers

A.A. Third Step Prayer

God,
I offer myself to Thee
To build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt.
Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will.
Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness
to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy love and Thy way of life.
May I do Thy will always!

Amen

N.A. 3rd Step Prayer

Take my will and my life,
Guide me in my recovery,
Show me how to live.

Jewish 3rd Step Prayer

Grant me inner peace..., Let my body be completely subordinate to my soul and have no other will or desire but to follow the desire of the holy soul, which is to do Your will.

Let peace reign between my soul and my body. Let my body be sanctified and purified until it becomes united with the holy soul and I carry out all Your commandments and do everything You want of me, body and soul, willingly and with great joy.

Let my body and soul unite in love and peace to do Your will sincerely, until I attain complete inner harmony and am ready to order my prayer before You perfectly. Let my prayer rise before You like the incense and perfect sacrifices offered by those who are whole and perfect.

From the *Fiftieth Gate* (Reb Nosson's prayers based
on the teachings of Reb Nachman of Breslov)

**Triangle Area SAA
Recovery Manual Steps 1 - 9
Track 2**

Closing

The monk philosopher Thomas Merton wrote this in No Man as an Island: “One of the moral diseases we communicate to one another in society comes from huddling together in the pale light of an insufficient answer to a question we are afraid to ask.”

The first three Steps call for nothing less than a complete overhaul of our value system which up till now focused solely on our own selfish needs. Doing so means finding answers to questions that shine an uncomfortably bright light on the dark and fearful corners of our conscience.

The Program tells us we do not have to be afraid any more.

Scrutinizing our ethical nature and supplanting it with a better one is the work of a lifetime. For this reason, the Steps have no endpoint.

We will never stop admitting our powerlessness.

Each tick of the clock will find us coming to believe.

Every worry will invite us to trust, have faith, and make a decision to turn.

In time, we will come to understand that this endless conversation with the Unknown and our place in it is one of the most meaningful gifts of the Program.

You are ready for Step 4.