

12-Step Journals: Step #7

“Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.”

Part of getting right-sized in Step Seven means making changes with the activity of our minds in addition to accepting and expressing our emotions. We learn to gradually bring the different parts of ourselves into a healthy balance as we practice new living skills. For some people a daily dose of prayer, meditation, and affirmations is very useful.

- **How has my understanding of my higher power grown?**

Even though it is a constant journey to see my shortcomings changed and “removed,” I can say that my understanding of my Higher Power has grown in realizing that my shortcomings have at least been identified. By this I mean that the evidence of my Higher Power has only grown as I have seen myself become more accepting of my shortcomings and trusting in the process that directs me to recovery.

- **How have the previous six steps prepared me for step seven?**

I believe that the previous steps leading up to this one have emphasized acceptance of your state, of your mistakes, and the reality of what your behaviors have allowed you to become. These realizations must be taken hold of in order to embrace change, which I believe is the emphasis I have seen in the previous step and in this one. I believe it is essential to dig deep into what it is that we are feeling, how we are behaving, and identifying the negative cycles before we even begin to think about taking the active steps toward change.

- **How does being aware of my own humility help when working the seventh step?**

As I have been reiterating, the removal that we are asking of our higher power has to do with an acceptance and surrender of where we have fallen short. It takes humility to submit these things to a Higher Power and allow Him to do the work that must be done in our minds and hearts. Pride can so easily get in the way of this step of surrender.

- **How do I plan to ask a God of my understanding or higher power to remove my shortcomings?**

I plan on verbalizing these identified shortcomings to God in prayer and journaling in order to express it in an outward manner. I believe that after sitting with these shortcomings and different struggles, it’s important to get them out into the open; it makes it more final and real to me, which will solidify this step of the process.

- **How does the spiritual principle of “surrender” work for me in step seven?**

I believe that a big part of this seventh step is completely guided by the choice of surrender; I must know that although I have seen my own failings, God is greater than them and carries me through. In this surrender there is so much rest, and I believe that this is what brings me further in that process of removal. I envision it like surgery: surrender brings me to peace and rest, allowing the Great Physician to do the work of healing in my soul/mind.

12-Step Journals: Step #7

“Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.”

- **How comfortable am I with prayer and meditation- even if it means making up my own?**

I am comfortable with it.

- **How has my sense of perspective or “reality” been out of proportion lately?**

My sense of reality can always be skewed by my emotional state, which quickly rises and falls with the situations I face everyday. I have been reminding myself as I go through moments of intensity to reframe the situation from different points of view, asking myself what I need in that moment to ease any overwhelming feelings.

- **Explain a time when I have been able to stop from acting on a character defect and practice a spiritual principle instead?**

Recently I was in disagreement with someone and was able to identify that my reaction to them was based upon emotions from a previous incident, I had been lashing out and potentially blowing the situation out of proportion. I then apologized and meditated on how I could take steps to heal from this upsetting incident so that my reactions would not continually stem from it; this led me to prayer and meditation on scripture.

- **Name a shortcoming that has been removed from my life or at least diminished in its power over me?**

I would say that one shortcoming that has been greatly diminished over the years is my self consciousness. With much prayer and learning about what is at the root of being self conscious/insecure, I have been able to identify my ego, pride, desire for affirmation, etc, and surrendered those things so that I would not be controlled by them any longer.

You can also use affirmations. Here are some suggestions:

- I accept all of me, the “good” and “bad.”
- Today I will develop an asset and release one shortcoming.
- I will remember that I have choices and freedom today.