**Step 7: Asking for Change**

*“I humbly asked Him to remove my shortcomings.”*

Just as Step 3 built on Steps 1 and 2, Step 7 is the first action building on Steps 4, 5, and 6, and is a way to carry out the decision you made in Step 3. If you have done this step before, discuss what this was like with your 12-step sponsor, your therapist, or someone else in recovery whom you trust.

1. Step 6 asked you to become willing to have your Higher Power remove the problem patterns in your thinking, feelings, and behavior that you identified while writing and sharing your inventory in Steps 4 and 5. Are you willing to have these patterns removed from your life? How do you feel about this idea? Do you think it will work?

2. Once you have become willing to be changed, does it make sense for you to ask your Higher Power to make this change? What do you think of the idea of letting it be done for you instead of trying to do all the work yourself?

3. What do you think will happen when you carry out Step 7 and ask your Higher Power to remove your defects of character? Recovering people generally report that rather than having their defects of character disappear, what happens is that they find they now have the ability to keep from acting out their problem patterns. They may still have the kinds of thoughts or feelings they had before, but now they’re able to choose not to act on them. Would this be an improvement for you?

4. Recovering people also usually find that the removal of these defects of character or their being given the ability to manage them is temporary and that if they don’t keep working on their recovery program they slide back into the old patterns. Are you willing to keep working on your recovery so that you’ll keep getting better, even if it’s something you have to keep doing from now on?

5. Some people notice an immediate feeling of being different when they work Step 7, such as the instant vanishing of their urges to drink or use. Others say they go through a more gradual change, not noticing a difference right away, but seeing it over days, weeks, or months. Often others notice before we do that we have changed in small ways, such as finding ourselves being more considerate of other drivers in traffic, laughing about situations that used to cause us to feel anger or anxiety, being more patient with our children, and so on. What are changes you would like others to see in your daily actions and feelings as a result of these steps?

Be sure to bring this handout to your next session with your therapist and talk about your thoughts and feelings about the exercise.