



# *Outside the Bottle*

*September 2020*

*District 16 Newsletter*

# Step Six

*as interpreted by JU*

**Step 6 says:** "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."

The 12 and 12 (I highly recommend this book!) says that this is the step that separates the men from the boys. In more equalitarian terms, that's really meant to say is that this step Distinguishes between mature, experienced individuals and rookies. By walking thru steps 1-5 we've been building a passageway to a healthier, happier life, and step 6 is when we walk thru it.

But what does "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character," even mean? By the time you've finished step 5, you should have a pretty darn good idea of those destructive attitudes and feelings that played a huge role in your drinking in the first place. Steps 4 and 5 are a lot of exhausting work! All of that nasty business of identifying faults and admitting to things!!! Thank God that's over. But as the Cage the Elephant song goes...ain't no rest for the wicked! Identifying our shortcomings and admitting them is not the end of the process.

One of the analogies I've liked best for this process is the idea that eliminating our character defects is similar to weeding a garden. Mankind has been battling weeds ever since we began making use of the land. Some might say that weeds are ugly but harmless. For some weeds that may be true. Heck, some weeds are even kinda pretty with little purple flowers on them. But other weeds like poison ivy and thistle will scratch you and cause rashes. Left to their devices, weeds will deprive your flowers or cucumbers or whatever you have in your garden of water, light and nutrients. Some weeds even produce substances that are toxic to your plants. Eventually, weeds will squeeze out the things you actually want in your garden. But we all know that even though weeds are a natural part of gardening...we don't have to accept them. So what do we do? We yank it out. Then there's another weed and we yank that one out. And another and another and... it just seems like a never ending process. So we pay our kids to start yanking weeds on the weekends, but they never get the whole thing by the root...so we have to go back to doing it ourselves. The same is true for our character defects. We all have valuable and desirable traits that we want to flourish, but they can't because our character defects (like weeds) are preventing their growth. We've got to keep weeding them out and addressing them each time they resurface so that our good qualities can grow.

So we get it...our character defects are likes weed.. But what does it mean, "entirely ready"??? Well, to me, first we become willing: that means to detect and let go of any resistance. When we see a character defect, we look at it and ask ourselves "Am I willing to let this go?" "Am I willing to be a new person?" "Am I willing to not even know who I am anymore without this defect?"

So you ask yourself..."Am I willing to go there?"

When you can say yes, you're READY! To be entirely ready simply means that we're willing to make your best effort and put the work in to turn these character defects over.

Putting off dealing with character defects restricts your serenity and places you in a vulnerable position to relapse.

So I recommend that you don't delay. Get ready and go! Get with your sponsor and update the list of character defects you dug up in steps 4 and 5. If you don't have a pretty clear idea of what you need to fix, you can't work steps 6 and 7.

# A Progressive Disease

Dan K

Hello, my name is Dan and I have a progressive disease known as alcoholism. I know first hand that it is progressive because I experienced this personally by abstaining from drugs and alcohol for 21+ years, from Nov. 2nd 1981 until 2002.

The first substance that I went back to was marijuana, sometime in 2002, after nearly two decades of untreated addiction. I tried doing it on my own. I had completed 90 days in Sacred Heart Rehab Center beginning on Nov. 5th 1981, after which I became a consistent member of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Two years into sobriety, my life was on a good course; I had new friends, a good job and was getting married. Life had really gotten busy - so busy that my meeting attendance began to taper off; slowly at first and then, before I knew it, I was no longer attending meetings at all. I didn't have time, and didn't think I needed it.

Unbeknownst to me, the progression of my disease continued on, even though I had abstained from using (relying totally on step one), I was becoming very sick mentally and spiritually. Eventually, my disease had me right where it wanted me. It told me that a little bit of controlled marijuana use wouldn't hurt my sobriety and eight years later I felt if I could control the use of my weed I believed that possibly I could do the same with alcohol. Somewhere around 2010-2011, after my life had fallen apart I took my first drink after three decades alcohol free, soon I found myself progressing at a blistering pace surpassing quickly where I had left off to the point of craving uncontrolled drinking.

Gratefully, I can say today that for the second time in my life (once at age 24 and then again at age 57) a miracle that I call a higher power took place and I was able to abstain and acknowledge this disease, today.

Thank you to Alcoholics Anonymous I'm 5 years clean and Sober.

I treat my alcoholism today making time to stay connected in many ways each 24 hours, I no longer allow the progressive aspects of this disease to override the recovery process one day at a time.

A great resource on the progressiveness of alcoholism is the Jellinek Curve (see end of newsletter).

**Keep on Trudgin'**

By: Phil S.





# Looking for In-Person Meetings?

Ferndale Central Office has you covered.  
Click >> [here](#) << for a full list.

## Happy Anniversary to these groups:

Came to Believe Group – Berkley  
Diversity Wednesday Group – Ferndale  
Monday Night Afterglow - Royal Oak  
Southfield Noontimers - Southfield

We are self-supporting through our own contributions. The District, representing the overall conscience of 76 groups, is greatly appreciative for any funds of any amount. May we all be united together in spreading the message across this geographic area. If groups would like to donate funds to District 16, please mail a check or money order:

*Must be made out to: **District 16 of Area 33 AA***  
PO Box 725362  
Berkley, MI 48072

### Contributions needed for future editions of this newsletter!

Share your experience, strength and hope OR design the cover!

Questions/Comments/Ideas: [district16news@gmail.com](mailto:district16news@gmail.com)

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# Addiction and Recovery

## The Jellinek Curve

