

READY

Principle 5: Voluntarily submit to every change God wants to make in my life and humbly ask Him to remove my character defects.

*“Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires.”
Matthew 5:6*

Step 6: We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

*“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.”
(James 4:10)*

Think About It

What does it mean to be entirely READY to have God remove our character defects?

Release control

God is a gentleman. In Principle 3 He didn't force His will on you. He waited for you to invite Him in! Now in Principle 5 you need to be entirely ready, willing to let God into every area of your life. He won't come in where He is not welcomed.

It has been said that “willingness is the key that goes into the lock and opens the door that allows God to begin to remove your character defects.”

“Help me to do your will, for you are my God. Lead me in good paths, for your Spirit is good.” (Psalm 143:10, TLB)

Easy does it

These principles and steps are not quick fixes! You need to allow time for God to work in your life. This principle goes further than helping you to stop doing wrong. It goes after the very defect that causes you to sin! *It takes time!*

“Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him to help you do it and he will.” (Psalm 37:5, TLB)

Accept the change

Seeing the need for change and allowing the change to occur are two different things. Principle 5 will not work if you are still trapped by your self-will. You need to be ready to accept God’s help throughout the transition.

*“So then, have your minds ready for action. Keep alert and set your hope completely on the blessing which will be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. Be obedient to God, and do not allow your lives to be shaped by those desires you had when you were still ignorant.”
(1 Peter 1:13–14, GNB)*

Do replace your character defects

You spent a lot of time with your old hang-ups, compulsions, obsessions, and habits. When God removes one, you need to replace it with something positive, such as recovery meetings, church, service, and volunteering! If you don’t, you open yourself for a negative character defect to return.

“When an evil spirit goes out of a person it travels over dry country looking for a place to rest. If it can’t find one, it says to itself, ‘I will go back to my house.’ So it goes back and finds the house empty, . . . then it goes out and brings along seven other spirits even worse than itself, and they come to live there.” (Matthew 12:43–45, GNB)

Yield to the growth

Your old self-doubts and low self-esteem may tell you that you are not worthy of the growth and progress that you are making in the program. Yield to the growth—it is the Holy Spirit’s work within you.

“The person who has been born into God’s family does not make a practice of sinning, because now God’s life is in him; so he can’t keep on sinning, for this new life has been born into him and controls him—he has been born again.” (1 John 3:9, TLB)

Are you entirely ready—willing—to voluntarily submit to any and all changes God wants to make in your life? If you are, read the Principle 5a verses on page 32 and pray the following prayer:

Dear God, thank You for taking me this far in my recovery journey. Now I pray for Your help in making me be entirely ready to change all my shortcomings. Give me the strength to deal with all of my character defects that I have turned over to You. Allow me to accept all the changes that You want to make in me. Help me be the person that You want me to be. In Your Son’s name I pray, Amen.

Write About It

1. Have you released control? (If not, review Principle 3: “Consciously choose to commit all my life and will to Christ’s care and control.”)
 - List the areas of your life that you have been able to turn over and surrender to Jesus Christ.

- List the areas of your life that you are still holding on to, attempting to control them on your own power.
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2. What does the phrase “easy does it” mean to you? What area of your recovery are you attempting to rush—looking for the “quick fix”?

 3. Explain the differences in seeing a need for change and being entirely ready to accept positive change in your recovery.

 4. It is very important that you allow God to replace your character defects with positive changes. What are some of the positive changes that you could make in your recovery? In your family? In your job?

5. Sometimes it is difficult for us in recovery to see the positive changes that God is making in our lives. Have you been able to accept and enjoy your growth? How?

PRINCIPLE 5A VERSES

*“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.”
(James 4:10)*

*“So get rid of all that is wrong in your life, both inside and outside,
and humbly be glad for the wonderful message we have received,
for it is able to save our souls as it takes hold of our hearts.”
(James 1:21, TLB)*

*“For I can never forget these awful years; always my soul will live
in utter shame. Yet there is one ray of hope: his compassion never
ends. It is only the Lord’s mercies that have kept us from
complete destruction.” (Lamentations 3:20–22, TLB)*

*“O loving and kind God, have mercy. Have pity upon me
and take away the awful stain of my transgressions. Oh, wash
me, cleanse me from this guilt. Let me be pure again.”
(Psalm 51:1–2, TLB)*