

You Won't Recover From Your Addiction Without This Crucial Step

"I came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

This is Step 2 of the 12 Steps to Recovery. Here's an explanation of Step 2, breaking down each word of the step so you can fully experience it.

Again, notice the step is written in the past tense. The original steps were written to share the process the original members of AA went through in recovery. There was a process through which they came to believe.

It is really a simple process. You come to believe many things during your lifetime. For example, you came to believe that there was a Santa Claus. Later, you came to believe that there wasn't a Santa Claus. As you grew older, you may have come to believe that a certain person liked you, and later realized they didn't like you. We come to believe certain religious and political positions. There is some consistency to this process throughout our lives. In this process, there is a definite point at which you understand or come to believe.

In 12-step groups, the process of coming to believe is something that often happens as a result of exposure to other recovering people. You may not necessarily know the date or hour when you did come to believe, but you know that you feel differently, and you begin to have hope. This is so important in recovery, because knowing that you have come to believe, or knowing you do believe can save your life. Addicts can get down, feel hopeless or worthless, experience severe shame and guilt from past traumas or present circumstances, and resort to sad behaviors of destruction, isolation and acting out. If

you have come to believe, you have hope that God cares for you, loves you and accepts you.

"A" is a common word. You use it every day: a cat, a dog, a book and in every context in which it is used, it denotes "one." If you were going to use a word to describe more than one, you would say "these" or another word that indicates plurality. This step is not written in the plural. It says "a power greater than ourselves." This is significant. Being an "a" here, you realize that there is one entity, one strength, one energy, one spirit but just one power. As believers, we know there is one power, and His name is Jesus.

This is one of the first areas which require trust from the addict. We now know that there is one who is greater than ourselves. This is the best news we have in recovery: We don't have to figure this out alone. As you begin to trust Jesus, you begin to recover from the sick patterns, poor choices and undesirable relationships that have been so much a part of your past.

"Could" is one of the most helpful, loving expressions in the 12 Steps. Could this power have the ability, the resources, the energy and the intention of helping you along in the recovery process? It is possible now to begin to be restored. It is possible now to begin to be healthy, to have loving relationships with loving people, to be loved and nurtured in a healthy way.

It can be done, and Jesus can do it. It is the experience of many in addiction recovery that if given the freedom and the opportunity—in other words, if they quit trying to do it all on their own—Jesus will do for them what they have been unable to do for themselves. All you have to do is ask and stay honest, and He will do for you what you have been unable to do.

"Restore" means bringing something back. When one thinks of

restoration, one typically thinks of restoring an automobile or an old house and making it look like new. The same is true of addiction recovery.

For so long, addicts have been robbed of spirituality, intimacy, trust and even their own reality. In a world that should have been safe, we violated ourselves again and again.

Insanity is natural when you live with a disease as crazy as an addiction. You may have difficulty applying the idea of insanity to yourself, but most addicts share that having two lifestyles at the same time and living with the secret can make them feel insane. You try again and again to do something that should work, but doesn't. You try and try to fix the problems that an addiction creates in your life, without success.

The behaviors themselves are insane, but the fact that you use them again and again, never stopping to realize that they're not working, qualifies you to be restored to sanity. It is possible for addicts to be restored to sanity. Those already in recovery have experienced it. They are living proof that it is possible to make better choices, and as you read this, I hope you know this is possible for you. You may still feel crazy, but if you have gotten this far in your recovery, you have a good chance of finding sanity. {eo}

Doug Weiss, Ph.D., is a nationally known author, speaker and licensed psychologist. He is the executive director of Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the author of several books including, *Recovery for Everyone*. You may contact Dr. Weiss via his website, or on his Facebook, by phone at 719-278-3708 or through email at heart2heart@.