

Step Three - "Turning the Will Over"

Your Sponsor's Companion Packet

1 Sponsor's Greeting

Well done on exploring the idea of a Higher Power in Step Two. Step Three is the first real *action* we take based on that new possibility. We consciously make a decision to hand over our will and our lives to the care of that Power.

This isn't a one-time "I'm giving up" declaration; it's a daily practice of trust, surrender, and partnership. Imagine it as letting go of the steering wheel just enough to let a trusted guide in the passenger seat help you read the map and navigate.

2 Core Concept - Turning Our Will Over

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."

The Big Book (4th ed.) gives us the exact "how-to" for this step in **Chapter 5, "How It Works" (pp. 58-71)**. This is the primary reading for Step Three.

Section	Pages	Why It Helps
"How It Works" (Primary)	pp. 58-71	This chapter explains the decision and gives us the Step Three Prayer (p. 63) .
"We Agnostics"	pp. 44-57	This chapter (which you read for Step Two) sets the stage by establishing the open-mindedness needed to make this decision.

The 12-Step "12x12" (Step Three essay, pp. 33-39) describes this step as the "key to the door." It separates the *decision* from the *action*, showing us that this is the moment we choose to turn the key and unlock the rest of the program.

3 What to Do This Week

Action	How to Do It	Approx. Time

Read "How It Works" (pp. 58-71) in the Big Book.	Read the Step Three Prayer (p. 63) several times. Notice the key words: "relieve me," "my difficulties," "Thy will."	20 min
Write Your Own "Turn-Over" Statement or just adopt the prayer from p. 63.	A personal version could be: "I decide to turn my will over to the care of a loving Higher Power, and I ask for help and guidance today."	5 min. Keep it somewhere you'll see it daily.
Practice a "Turn-Over" Prayer (or affirmation) each morning.	Use the prayer from p. 63 or your own. This sets the tone for your entire day.	2 min each morning
Discuss Your Statement with me (or another trusted member).	Bring the written line or your thoughts on the prayer to our next chat.	When ready
Read the 12x12 Step-Three Essay (pp. 33-39).	Underline the "key to the door" analogy.	15 min

4 Tradition Three - "The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking."

This Tradition is the group's "Step Three" decision. Just as we, as individuals, must let go of playing God in our own lives, Tradition Three ensures that the group never plays God in anyone else's.

By setting the bar for entry this low, A.A. radically decides to "turn its will over" to a Higher Power, trusting that *anyone* with even a flicker of desire belongs. It removes our ego, our prejudice, and our "will" from the process. This creates the open, inclusive, and safe fellowship that we, as individuals, can then trust as a "Power greater than ourselves" in Step Two, allowing us to finally make the personal decision in Step Three.

5 Reflection & Integration (Your Personal Worksheet)

1. **What does "turning my will over" look like in everyday life?** List three small, concrete situations (e.g., "Pausing before reacting in traffic," "Asking for help instead of struggling," "Accepting a 'no'").
2. **Where do you feel the urge to control?** Identify your biggest "control" trigger (e.g.,

other people's opinions, outcomes at work, fear of the future).

3. **Link to Step Two.** How does *believing* in a Higher Power (Step 2) make it possible to *trust* that Power with your will (Step 3)? Write a brief connection.
4. **Check for resistance.** Note any "I can't do that because..." or "What if..." thoughts. What fear is underneath them? Be honest.

(Keep this worksheet with your Step One and Two notes—together they form a mini-recovery journal.)

6 Suggested Follow-Up Reading

Source	Pages / Sections	What to Highlight
Big Book - "How It Works"	pp. 58-71	The Step Three Prayer (p. 63) and the paragraph that follows it, describing the results.
12x12 - Step Three Essay	pp. 33-39	The "key to the door" concept and the discussion of dependence vs. independence.
12x12 - Tradition Three Essay	pp. 139-145	The idea that "A.A. is for alcoholics who want it" and that "no one can play God."

Mark the passages that speak to you; they'll become touch-stones when you practice surrender.

7 Moving Toward Step Four

Now that you have made a decision and have a daily prayer to practice, the next step asks you to look at *what* has been blocking you from this Higher Power. You've turned the key (Step 3); now you're going to open the door and take a fearless look at what's inside the "house" of your past.

8 Quick-Help FAQ

Question	Short Answer
What if I don't know what "God" is?	That's why the step says "as we understood Him." Your "understanding" can

	be the group, love, or just "not me." The <i>decision</i> is the important part.
Is surrender the same as giving up?	No. Giving up is resigning to hopelessness. Surrender is an active choice to <i>trust</i> a positive, caring force to guide you. It's an act of courage and hope.
Do I just do this once?	You make the decision once, but you <i>practice</i> it daily (or hourly!). Saying the prayer each morning is a great way to "renew" the decision.

9 Final Encouragement

You're now practicing one of the most powerful acts in recovery—letting go and letting a Higher Power guide you. That takes courage and daily commitment. Celebrate the fact that you have a prayer and a decision to lean on. Keep the momentum, stay gentle with yourself, and remember I'm here to walk beside you.

-Your Sponsor