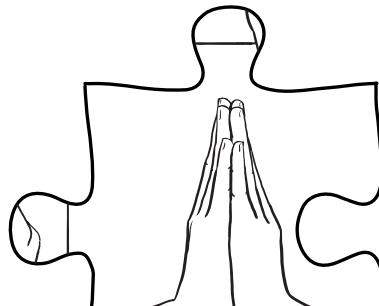
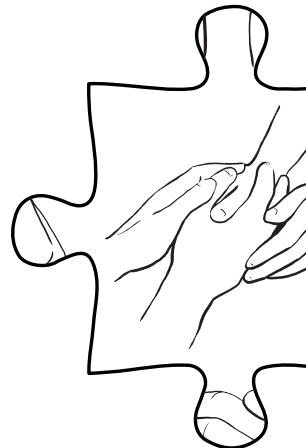
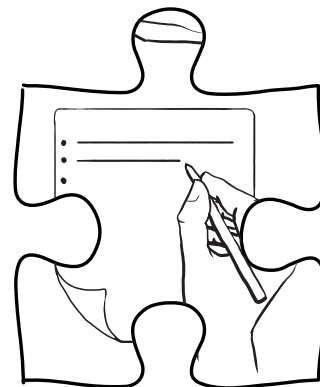
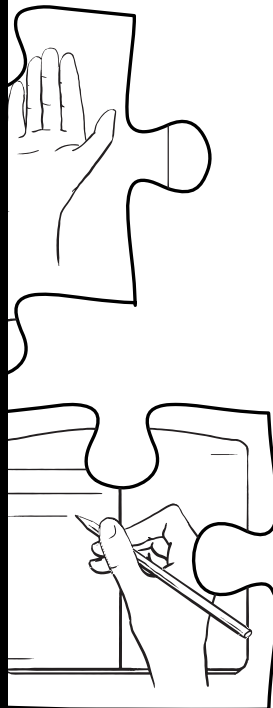
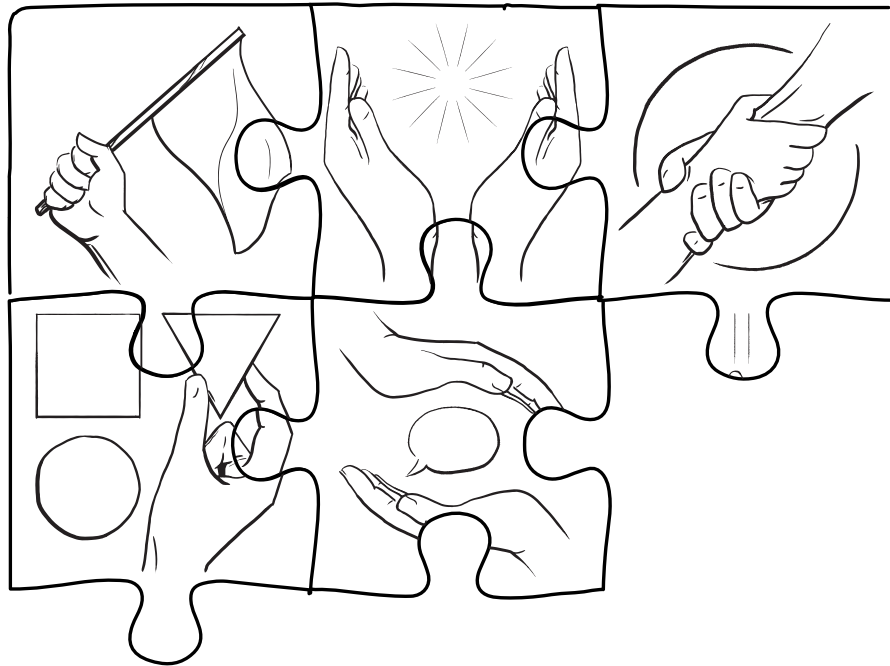
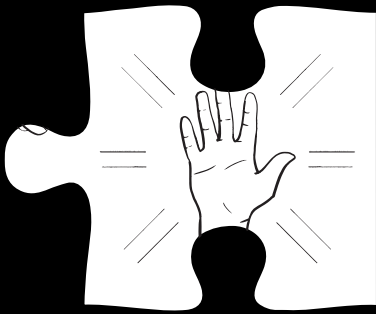


EXODUS STEPWORK PROGRAMME

STEP SIX

“We were entirely ready to have God remove all these shortcomings.”



“We were **entirely ready to have God remove all these shortcomings.**”

THESE SHORTCOMINGS

To get the most out of Step 6, it is essential that we **clearly understand and are comfortable with the phrase, shortcomings**. If not, we may find ourselves closed off to the Step 6 process or **feeling condemned** by it.

Shortcomings are, simply, the **imperfect parts of ourselves**. Amongst the varied traits that make us who we are, our shortcomings are those **qualities without which we would be better off** because they **bring us more pain than gain**. We can identify our shortcomings by the **degree to which a particular characteristic negatively impacts us and the people around us**.

Up until now, we have mainly referred to shortcomings as **liabilities** or **wrongs**, where liabilities have been defined as **unproductive mental, emotional, and behavioural patterns**. We could also use synonyms such as, **flaws, faults, weaknesses or shortcomings**.

Having **taken stock of ourselves in Steps 4 and 5**, we should, by now, have a reasonable grasp of what our shortcomings are. Perhaps we have identified a pattern of emotional avoidance or a tendency to blame others for our own behaviour. Maybe we have noticed a lack of firm boundaries, a victim-mentality, a prideful spirit, or a fearful outlook.

- Turn to the table at the end of this workbook. In the first left-hand column, create a list of shortcomings that you have identified in working through Steps 4 and 5. In the second column, describe how each shortcoming negatively affects you and others. Don't worry about the remaining columns for now. You will complete these later.

It is reassuring to know that **shortcomings are completely normal and that we are not alone** in our imperfection. As human beings, who are **innately flawed**, every one of us has our own set of shortcomings. Romans 3:23 reminds us that “**all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**” Faults and weaknesses are a natural part of what it means to **not be God**.

We live in a world that **conditions us to believe that weakness is synonymous with failure** and that **failure is not an acceptable option**. As a result, we often **deny our shortcomings** and become **defensive** when they are brought out into the light. When we do this, we, ironically, end up **protecting the very self-destructive parts** of ourselves that, if surrendered, would benefit us.



But He said to me,
“My grace is sufficient
for you, for My
power is made perfect
in weakness.”
Therefore, I will boast all
the more gladly about
my weaknesses, so that
Christ's power may
rest on me.
2 Corinthians 12:9

- How do you feel about your shortcomings?

- How will you avoid becoming defensive when faced with your shortcomings?

What we must keep in mind in Step 6 is that **shortcomings do not mean that we are irrevocably broken, nor do they lessen our worth** as an individual.

Although this Step focuses specifically on our weaknesses, we **must not forget that we are made up of many positive assets too**. Our character refers to the **interaction of individual qualities** that distinguish each of us as a person. **It is not helpful to allow our work in this Step to breed self-criticism and self-condemnation.**

- What positive personal assets have you identified in working Steps 4 and 5?

- How will you avoid falling into self-condemnation in this Step?

BECOMING ENTIRELY READY

Step 6 is the beginning of what we can call the **Change Steps**. These are the steps that help us to **develop a new recovery-based identity that is no longer bound by our self-defeating patterns of the past**. The early developers of the 12 Steps referred to Step 6 as the **Step of Repentance** because of its paradigm shifting theme that sees us **turn away from what has been** to journey in an **opposite direction**. In this context, becoming entirely ready means reaching a **state of readiness to live in a completely different way**.


So, in Step 6, we **get ready to let go** of some of our most **entrenched characteristics**. This is **not always easy**. Change requires us to **relinquish the familiar and step into the unknown**. This may make us feel anxious or even fearful. We may think things like, “But who will I become?” and, “How will I survive without the qualities that I have relied on for so long?”

We can ease any anxiety that we may be feeling by returning to the goal of this Step: **becoming entirely ready**. Step 6 is **not about immediate change**. It is about **preparing our hearts and minds for change**.

Although our shortcomings have not served us well, a large majority of them will have served a **maladaptive purpose**. In other words, many of our shortcomings have a **payoff**. In this context, a payoff is a **dysfunctional benefit** that is derived from a particular mental or behavioural pattern. For example, the payoff of using is often emotional avoidance. The payoff of denial is that we do not have to face up to our problems. The payoff of aggression could be to retain control.

- How do you feel about the prospect of letting go of your shortcomings?

- Who do you fear you may become when your shortcomings are removed?



Do you want to get well?
John 5:6

- Are there parts of yourself that you like but that might be unhelpful?

- Are there any shortcomings that you believe you cannot live without? Which are these and what makes you so attached to them?

- Turn again to the table at the end of this workbook. In the third column, write down the payoff for each of your shortcomings.
- How beneficial are these payoffs to you long-term?

It has been written that, “When the fear of remaining the same becomes greater than the fear of change, we will surely let go.”

- At the moment, which is greater for you – the fear of change or the fear of staying the same?

It is interesting to explore the **link between our shortcomings and the beliefs** that we hold. Mostly, **flaws in our character are related to flaws in our belief systems.**

For example, codependency can be linked to flawed beliefs, such as, “I am responsible for other people’s well-being.” Stoicism can be linked to flawed beliefs, such as, “I must never show vulnerability.” Entitlement may be linked to flawed beliefs, such as, “I am special and different.”

- Turn to the table at the end of this workbook. For each shortcoming, consider the belief that could be underpinning this trait. Write down your beliefs accordingly, in the fourth column.

- How rational and healthy are your beliefs? Which of your beliefs are particularly flawed?

SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: WILLINGNESS

Willingness is being prepared to do whatever it takes to maintain recovery. It is a readiness to embrace change, rather than fight it.

Although embracing it can be a challenge, **change is an essential part of a sustainable, meaningful recovery** journey. Without personal transformation, the underlying mechanisms that have been sustaining our addiction remain intact and continue to have a negative impact. This ultimately leads us back to using or acting out over time. If lasting recovery is to be achieved, the **structures that have been maintaining our dysfunction must be dismantled and replaced with healthy, adaptive alternatives**. In other words, if it is genuine recovery that we seek, **change is not optional**.

So, despite any doubts and apprehensions that we may have, it is critical that we deliberately work on our **willingness to change** in this Step. Becoming entirely ready means developing a **sincere and deep desire for healing and restoration**.

- Do you believe that you can change?

- How sincere and deep is your current desire for change?

- How have you changed in recovery so far?

- What could come in the way of your willingness to change?

Although we have done a lot of work so far, in Steps 1 to 5, there is **still much to be achieved**.

Change is much easier **when we feel motivated**. If we are feeling hesitant, we will benefit from **considering the advantages of change**.

- What could your life look like without your shortcomings? Turn, for the last time, to the table at the end of this workbook. In the final column, describe how the removal of each character defect might enrich and enhance your life.

Change is also easier **when we have faith** that the ultimate outcome will be positive. Here, we can find rest in the **decision that we made in Step 3**: to entrust our lives to the care of God.

- How does the decision that you made in Step 3 help you to become entirely ready in this Step?



Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

Isaiah 43:18-19

- What does this verse say to you?


TO HAVE GOD REMOVE

In Step 2, we came to believe that **God could restore us to sanity**, in ways that we never could on our own. This admission is **just as applicable here** in Step 6. In Step 6, we do not work on the will to remove our own shortcomings. This would mean relying on our own limited strength, which, as we have learnt, never gets us very far.

Rather, we work on being **willing to release our shortcomings to God** so that **He can work in us** with His unlimited authority and wisdom.

This does not mean that we won't need to take any responsibility for our progress from here on. We will need to **continue to contribute a spirit of willingness** and we will need to **choose to follow God's guidance as He moulds us according to His will**.

The hope and joy of Step 6 is that **God can reshape our character** and that He also **desires to do so**. Although our capacity to change ourselves may be weak, we can **rely on God's transformative power to redeem us**.



But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.
2 Corinthians 4:7

- What is the difference between being willing for God to remove your shortcomings and trying to do it yourself?

- Describe the hope and joy of Step 6 in your own words.

- How can you display your readiness to have God remove your shortcomings?

- What is your personal prayer for Step 6?

STEP 6 PRAYER

ONWARDS AND UPWARDS

In Step 6, we have reached a place where we are **ready and willing** to **turn away** from our self-defeating patterns of the past and, with the help of God, **embrace a new identity**.

- On a scale of 1-10, how much effort have you put into Step 6?

1 indicates little effort. 10 indicates extreme effort.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩

- What have been your most significant realisations in Step 6?

- How could you apply the principles of Step 6 to help you **throughout** your recovery journey?

- Are you ready to move on to Step 7?

Shortcoming	Impact on Self and Others	Payoff	Defect of Belief	Impact of Defect Removal

Shortcoming	Impact on Self and Others	Payoff	Defect of Belief	Impact of Defect Removal

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