

LETTING GO OF OUR OLD SELVES

Carefully reading the first five proposals we ask if we have omitted anything, for we are building an arch through which we shall walk a free man at last. . . . Are we now ready to let God remove from us all the things which we have admitted are objectionable?

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, pp. 75, 76

The Sixth Step is the last "preparation" Step. Although I have already used prayer extensively, I have made no formal request of my Higher Power in the first Six Steps. I have identified my problem, come to believe that there is a solution, made a decision to seek this solution, and have "cleaned house." I now ask: Am I willing to live a life of sobriety, of change, to let go of my old self? I must determine if I am truly ready to change. I review what I have done and become willing for God to remove all my defects of character; for in the next Step, I will tell my Creator I am willing and will ask for help. If I have been thorough in the preparation of my foundation and feel that I am willing to change, I am then ready to continue with the next Step. "If we still cling to something we will not let go, we ask God to help us be willing." (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 76)

ENTIRELY READY?

"This is the Step that separates the men from the boys." . . . the difference between "the boys and the men" is the difference between striving for a self-determined objective and for the perfect objective which is of God. . . . It is suggested that we ought to become entirely willing to aim toward perfection. . . . The moment we say, "No, never!" our minds close against the grace of God. . . . This is the exact point at which we abandon limited objectives, and move toward God's will for us.

TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS, pp. 63, 68, 69

Am I entirely ready to have God remove these defects of character? Do I know at long last that I cannot save myself? I have come to believe that I cannot. If I am unable, if my best intentions go wrong, if my desires are selfishly motivated and if my knowledge and will are limited—then I am ready to embrace God's will for my life.