The Abandonment List

Step Three — would I give control of this to God?

> *"Each person is like an actor who wants to run the whole show; is forever trying to arrange the lights, the ballet, the scenery and the rest of the players in his own way. If his arrangements would only stay put, if only people would do as he wished, the show would be great."*
>
> p. 61

This is not an inventory and it is not a promise. It is a **readiness check**. Go down the list one line at a time and mark each one honestly. The ones you cannot hand over yet are not failures — **they are the map of where self-will is still running the show**, and they are what Step Four is for.

"Would I give control of this to God?" ☐ YES — I'd hand it over ☐ NOT YET

Mark **every** line. A blank line is an answer you haven't given yet — and "not yet" is an honest answer, so use it.

MYSELF	YES	NOT YET
My perceived inadequacies.	☐	☐
My strengths — and the credit I want for them.	☐	☐
My reputation. What I am known for.	☐	☐
What others think of me — and their judgment of me.	☐	☐
My health and my body.	☐	☐
My comfort.	☐	☐
My sex life.	☐	☐
	☐	☐

OTHER PEOPLE	YES	NOT YET
That I know best — for myself *and for others*.	☐	☐
My judgment of others — the verdicts I pass.	☐	☐
The way I think about others.	☐	☐
The way I treat other people.	☐	☐
The way other people treat me.	☐	☐
Whether anybody changes.	☐	☐
Being right.	☐	☐
Being understood.	☐	☐
	☐	☐

MY CIRCUMSTANCES	YES	NOT YET
The way I spend my time.	☐	☐
My finances.	☐	☐
My job.	☐	☐
My minute-by-minute, day-to-day living.	☐	☐
The results of my best efforts.	☐	☐
The pace — how fast things happen.	☐	☐
	☐	☐

BEHIND ME & AHEAD OF ME	YES	NOT YET
The bad things that have happened to me in the past.	☐	☐
My future.	☐	☐
The bad things that might happen to me.	☐	☐
The people I love — and what happens to them.	☐	☐
	☐	☐

MY RECOVERY	YES	NOT YET
My service to others.	☐	☐
How fast I get better.	☐	☐
Whether this works for me.	☐	☐
What people find out about me.	☐	☐
My anger — whether I am entitled to it.	☐	☐
	☐	☐

My Own List

the things nobody had to tell you about

The printed list is somebody else's. **The ones that matter most are the ones you add** — a person, a plan, a grudge, a fear, a thing you will not talk about.

WHAT ELSE AM I HOLDING?

would I give control of this to God?

	☐	☐
	☐	☐
	☐	☐
	☐	☐
	☐	☐
	☐	☐

WHY THIS LIST EXISTS

> *"Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles... Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us! God makes that possible."*
>
> p. 62

Not the drinking. The running of the show.

- Every item you did not check is a place you are still the director.
- **That is information, not a verdict.** Nobody checks them all.
- The Book does not ask you to feel ready — only **willing**.

WHERE THE "NOT YET" COLUMN GOES

Straight into Step Four.

- Look at every line you marked **NOT YET**.
- Ask one question of each: **what am I afraid would happen if I let go of this?**
- That answer is a fear, and fear goes in column three of the inventory.
- Most of them will turn out to be **the same two or three fears wearing different clothes**.

You do not have to resolve a single "not yet" before taking the Third Step. **You only have to be honest about which ones they are.**

THEN THE DECISION

*"We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last **abandon ourselves utterly to Him**." — p. 63*

"God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!"

How It Works, p. 63

The decision is made once.
The abandoning is done daily.

For the sponsor. Dictate it one line at a time — the pauses are the point, and **the line he argues with is the line to stop on**. He takes it home to meditate on and **calls you when he is ready for the Third Step**. Twelve items are the original *AA 12-Step Packet* list; the rest were added here.