Sponsee Meeting — Step 2 & 3

> ***The goal of this meeting:*** *Step 1 left him "properly armed with facts about himself" (◆ BB p.18 ¶4) — armed with the* ***problem****. "Lack of power, that was our dilemma." (◆ BB p.45 ¶1) Step 2 and Step 3 are the* ***solution****: come to believe a Power greater than himself can do what he can't (Step 2), then make the decision to let that Power run the show (Step 3) — and take the Third Step Prayer* ***together*** *before he leaves.*

Companion guide: step-12.md §24–39 · **Prior meeting:** step-00-01.md · **Take-home worksheet:** Grudge List — Columns 1 & 2 · **Your coaching card:** grudge-list (Columns 1-2) · **Examples packet:** ▤ Columns 1 & 2 worked examples

> ***Going deeper on Step 3 (plain talk / not religious):*** *If he stalls on "God" or needs Step 3 broken down, walk him through step-03-plain.md — the requirement inventory ("running my own way doesn't work") at a 6th-grade reading level, written for someone barely sure about God.*

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0. Before You Start

- [ ] Recap the decision he made: he came back with his **yes**, signed the BB cover (any lengths). Today is not a re-sell — he's in. *"If he is sincerely interested... he must decide for himself... the desire must come from within."* (◆ BB p.95 ¶4)
- [ ] Quick check: is he clear-headed today? If jittery or befogged, the work won't land — reschedule.
- [ ] Open with the Set-Aside Prayer — both of you (*not BB text; Don Pritz, Denver AA "God Squad"*):

> *Dear God, please set aside everything I think I know about myself, this book, my disease, these steps, and especially about You dear God so that I might have an open mind and a new experience with all these things. Please help me to see the truth.*

1. The Bridge — From the Problem to the Power

STEP 1 GAVE HIM THE PROBLEM. STEPS 2 & 3 GIVE HIM THE POWER AND THE DECISION.

> *"Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a Power greater than ourselves. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this Power?"* (◆ BB p.45 ¶1)

- His log & loser list proved he has no power of his own — every log failed. That's not the bad news; it's the doorway. The book's whole object: *"to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem."* (◆ BB p.45 ¶1)

2. Step 2 — Came to Believe

> *"Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."* (◆ BB p.59)

The whole step turns on one low bar — **not "believe," but "willing to believe."**

> *"We needed to ask ourselves but one short question. 'Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?' … upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built."* (◆ BB p.47 ¶2)

Ask → "Do you now believe, or are you even *willing* to believe, that there is a Power greater than yourself?" (yes / no)

- The bar is honesty, not certainty: *"Willingness, honesty and open mindedness are the essentials of recovery. But these are indispensable."* (◆ BB p.568 ¶3 · Appendix II)
- He doesn't have to define it. He has to be willing. *"…our members find that they have tapped an unsuspected inner resource which they presently identify with their own conception of a Power greater than themselves."* (◆ BB pp.567–568 · Appendix II)
- It's already in him — he doesn't import it, he uncovers it: *"deep down in every man, woman, and child, is the fundamental idea of God."* (◆ BB p.55 ¶1) — *"We found the Great*

Reality deep down within us." (◆ BB p.55 ¶2)

- The reed becomes the hand: *"What seemed at first a flimsy reed, has proved to be the loving and powerful hand of God. A new life has been given us or, if you prefer, 'a design for living' that really works."* (◆ BB p.28 ¶2)
- This message has to carry weight, not froth: *"In nearly all cases, their ideals must be grounded in a power greater than themselves, if they are to re-create their lives."* (◆ BB p.xxviii ¶2)
- And the seeking is never one-sided: *"But He has come to all who have honestly sought Him. When we drew near to Him He disclosed Himself to us!"* (◆ BB p.57 ¶2-3)

> ***Trauma note (he carries it):*** *"a Power greater than yourself" is* ***his*** *conception, not anyone's god handed to him — and explicitly* ***not*** *the people who failed or harmed him. If "Father" language is loaded, let him build the conception from scratch. Willing-to-believe is enough today; don't push for more.*

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3. Step 3 — Made a Decision

> *"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."* (◆ BB p.59)

First the relief valve — this is progress, not perfection:

> *"We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection."* (◆ BB p.60 ¶2)

The three pertinent ideas — walk each, get a yes:

> *"(a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives."* (◆ BB p.60 ¶4) ***Ask → from your loser list, is this you? (yes / no)***
>
> *"(b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism."* (◆ BB p.60 ¶5) ***Ask → from your log list, are you beyond human aid? (yes / no)***
>
> *"(c) That God could and would if He were sought."* (◆ BB p.60 ¶6) ***Ask → are you willing to believe? (yes / no)***

> *"Being convinced, we were at Step Three, which is that we decided to turn our will and our life over to God as we understood Him."* (◆ BB p.60 ¶7)

The first requirement — the conviction the decision rests on:

> *"The first requirement is that we be convinced that any life run on self-will can hardly be a success."* (◆ BB p.60 ¶8) *Ask → **from your log & loser list, are you convinced a life run on self-will can hardly be a success? (yes / no)***

The root the decision pulls out:

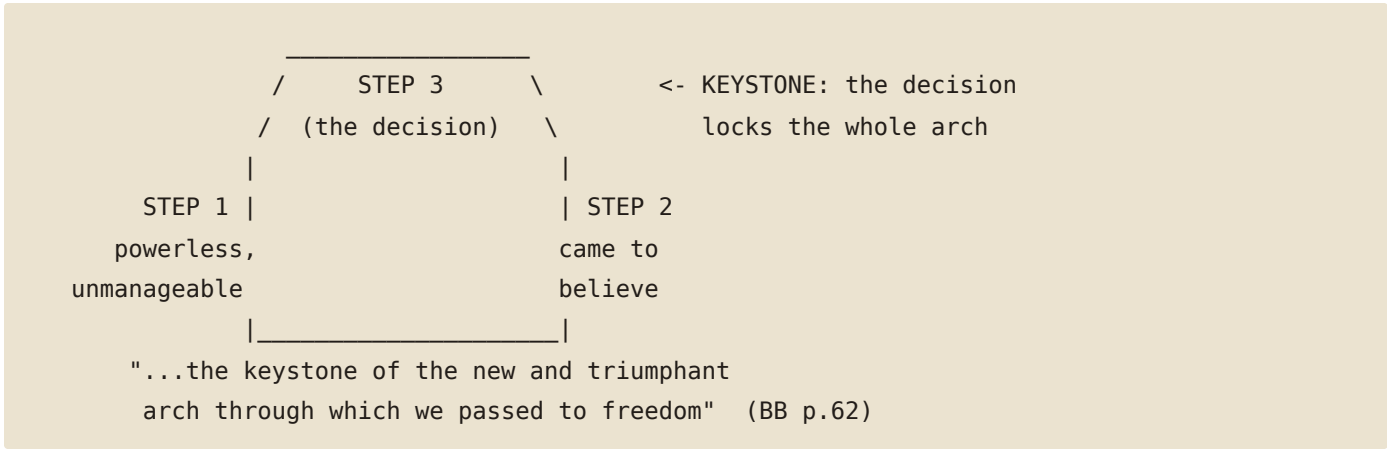
> *"Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles."* (◆ BB p.62 ¶1) *"Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us! God makes that possible."* (◆ BB p.62 ¶2)

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR ILLNESS & RECOVERY. THE DECISION IS YOURS TO MAKE.

The how and the why — quit playing God:

> *"First of all, we had to quit playing God. It didn't work. … Next, we decided that hereafter in this drama of life, God was going to be our Director. He is the Principal; we are His agents. He is the Father, and we are His children. … this concept was the keystone of the new and triumphant arch through which we passed to freedom."* (◆ BB p.62 ¶3)

DRAW: THE ARCH — STEP 3 IS THE KEYSTONE



- **STEP 1** and **STEP 2** are the two pillars; **STEP 3** is the keystone that locks them — without the decision, the arch never stands.
- The payoff of taking the position: *"When we sincerely took such a position, all sorts of remarkable things followed… We were reborn."* (◆ BB p.63 ¶1)
- The real aim of the whole decision: *"Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us."* (◆ BB p.77)

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4. Take Step Three — Together

> *"We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him."* (◆ BB p.63 ¶2)

Ask → are you ready to abandon yourself utterly to God, as you understand Him? (yes / no) — if yes, take the prayer together, out loud:

> *"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!"* (◆ BB p.63 ¶2)

WHEN YOU CAN ANSWER YES, WE TAKE THIS PRAYER TOGETHER — AND WE HAVE TAKEN STEP THREE.

- Then meditate a moment on what God's will is for him today.
- This becomes a **morning** practice — *"Every morning — are you willing to do this?"* The decision is made once; it is renewed daily.

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5. Get Him Started — The Grudge List (Step 4, Columns 1 & 2)

The decision must be followed *at once* by action — *"Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action"* — so we send him home writing today.

HAND HIM: Grudge List — Columns 1 & 2 · *(your coaching card: sponsor coaching columns 1 2)* · *(examples packet, print the PDF:* ▤ PDF *— all 43 worked examples with a one-line gloss each, and a dad's list for a man with a wife and kids)*

> *"Resentment is the 'number one' offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. … In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper. We listed people, institutions or principles with whom we were angry. We asked ourselves why we were angry."* (◆ BB p.64 ¶3)

Prayer before he writes (each time he sits down):

> *"God please help me face and be rid of the things in myself which have been blocking me from You, other people and myself."*

(printed: ▤ Prayers for the Fourth Step *— every prayer of the inventory on one page, with a wallet strip he can cut out; hand it over with the grudge list)*

Column 1 — who / what he resents. Three categories:

- **People** — anyone he's angry at, past or present.
- **Institutions** — a church, a company, a school, the government, AA itself.
- **Principles** — beliefs/ideas he's angry at (e.g. *"God does not care about me," "I'll never be OK without money"*).

Column 2 — why he's angry. Beside each name, every specific reason. Brief — just enough that he knows why. Number each name; letter each resentment.

The assignment is Columns 1 & 2 ONLY:

- [ ] Do **Columns 1 and 2 only** — nothing else — until the list is finished. *"You will know when the list is done."*
- [ ] *"We went back through our lives. Nothing counted but thoroughness and honesty."* (◆ BB p.65 ¶4)
- [ ] **Stop there. Bring the list to me before touching Column 3.** Column 3 (how each one hit him) is the next meeting.

> ***Trauma note:*** *Columns 1 & 2 are the* ***safest*** *part — they never ask what he did. Say that out loud; it lowers the threat. People who harmed him as a child* ***belong on the list*** *— resentment toward them is legitimate and goes in Column 1. (The "what was my mistake" question — and the exemption that a child does* ***not*** *inventory his abuser — is Column 4, far down the road. Don't go near it today.) The book looks for "our own mistakes" — never "his part" — but that's a later column; today is only who and why.*

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6. Close — Next Meeting & Hope

Assignments for the interval:

- [ ] Pray the Third Step Prayer every morning.
- [ ] Write the grudge list — Columns 1 & 2 only — and bring it back.
- [ ] Schedule the next meeting (Step 4 / Column 3 — *how each resentment hit you*). Bring the ▤ Column 3 examples packet to hand him then.

Close with hope and a prayer:

> *"When we sincerely took such a position, all sorts of remarkable things followed... We were reborn."* (◆ **BB p.63 ¶1**)

- Close with a prayer.

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