

Step 1

Step 1 is about admitting what is wreaking havoc on our lives. For me, it was drugs; and while I wasn't ready to admit powerlessness, I was willing to concede that my life was unmanageable. I couldn't deny my life was a mess, a nightmare, in fact. I've since learned this is often the case with the first step. People will admit one part or the other, but seldom do we grasp it entirely until we're in a great deal of pain. Pain is the trigger for most change.

We don't have to wait until our situations are unbearable to take the first Step toward a better life. Anyone can take this Step at any time regarding any matter. This Step is appropriate for the ordinary, primarily healthy people who allow traits and behaviors to interfere with their well-being. Often, we know things could be better but we are accustomed to things as they are. We aren't uncomfortable enough to do anything about our impediments to true happiness. We may be powerless over feelings of anger, fear, resentment, insecurity, anxiety or depression. We may be powerless over bad habits like over-eating, gambling, procrastinating, or worrying. We may be addicted to sugar, caffeine, tobacco or sex. Possibly we're strapped with irreconcilable differences in relationships or at work; maybe we suffer from an inability to commit, or to complete tasks or goals. We're stuck in a proverbial rut. Let's insert any one of these obstacles or Life Liabilities into the first step and make a start toward overcoming it.

These bad habits and negative feelings are handicaps, hindrances to the life we are meant to live. They can get out of control and cause stress, conflict and related health problems. They prevent us from reaching our potential and deter us from our rightful purpose. "Life Liabilities" as I like to call them, pull us off course like a flat tire does a car. The flat has to be changed before we can successfully continue our journey.

Once we identify which aspect of our lives is creating a problem for us, we simply acknowledge it. If we determine it is within our power to fix it, great; but the chances are we would have done so already if we could. We embark on the 12 Simple Steps because it is beyond our capacity to overcome this difficulty on our own. So, we take Step 1. We admit we are powerless over our problem, that it is making our lives unmanageable.

We got honest with ourselves; this is the crux of Step 1. Leading us to the next step we concede to our innermost selves that we need help with this issue whatever it may be because it is too much for us to handle on our own. We are powerless to change it and our lives on our own. We enjoy immediate relief from this quiet act of admitting our powerlessness and surrender, from relinquishing control. We free ourselves from the struggle.

Our dilemma is that we are powerless without help. The solution is to find a Power greater than ourselves who will help.