

## Step 3

### **Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood God.**

The guiding principle of this Step is Faith.

In Step 1, we admitted we are powerless over clutter. Our way doesn't work. We're done trying and failing. In Step 2, we came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity and solve our problem with cluttering. The gift of desperation makes us want to partner with that Power to achieve a better life.

The way we work *with* our Higher Power is through surrendering control. We make a firm decision to practice complete surrender, one day at a time. We stop working *against* our Higher Power with willful cluttering behaviors and instead embrace spiritually base living.

Although our Higher Power can change us, we are not forced to do anything we resist. That's why we pray and invite participation. We no longer seek satisfaction from objects, activities, and people. We find satisfaction from within...by our Higher Power touching our being. This process involves leaving our comfort zone, praying, meditating, evaluating, and adjusting. It becomes more comfortable with time and practice.

If we make a genuine decision, there are no half measures. There's no turning back. Decisions make us come to action. Our drive becomes visible.

The *first* sign of a decision is that we become willing to pray whenever unsure or before important choices. We turn to the Serenity Prayer to handle situations that still baffle us. The Serenity Prayer is:

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
Courage to change the things I can,  
And wisdom to know the difference.

Clutterers Anonymous has its own Serenity Prayer, to help make decisions about our clutter. It says:

God, grant me the serenity to keep the things I need to keep,  
The courage to release the things I do not need,  
And the wisdom to know the difference.

The *second* sign of a decision is that we become willing to pay attention to our motivations. We find out when we are willful or when we are inspired and cooperating with our Higher Power.

Before bringing something home, we ask ourselves why:

1. I desire it or want to soothe myself.
2. I am acting impulsively, not according to a rational plan or need.
3. I think I may need it some day.
4. It is available now or has a great price.
5. I am saving or rescuing it.

Before making a commitment to be away from home, we ask ourselves why:

1. Am I acting impulsively in order to escape from my clutter?
2. Am I attempting to feel good about myself?
3. Am I motivated by experience greed or a Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)?
4. Am I people-pleasing, afraid of disappointing others or of not being nice?
5. Am I avoiding higher-priority actions?

The decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God is the beginning of our new life in recovery. We start to invite inspiration and inner guidance from our Higher Power. We allow that Power to do for us what we could not do for ourselves.

We learn to surrender our clutter; monitor when we're taking back control; and entrust our obstacles, needs, and desires to our Higher Power.

Faith comes from our willingness to trust our Higher Power and the successes we see from that partnership. We need only believe and then ask for help in our lives.

The following questions will help you make this decision:

1. What does *surrender* mean to me?
  - a. Does it feel humiliating?
  - b. Why or why not?
  - c. Does it feel liberating?
  - d. Why or why not?
2. How can I tell when I am being willful or self-led?

3. What is my understanding of my Higher Power's will for me?
4. What are my difficulties in trusting my Higher Power with:
  - a. My fears?
  - b. My obsessions and compulsions?
  - c. My clutter?
  - d. My hopes and dreams?
  - e. Write about each area.
5. In order to deal with my clutter, am I willing to strengthen my spiritual life through daily prayer?
  - a. If not, why not?
  - b. Write about my willingness to turn to prayer.
6. Am I willing to trust my Higher Power with my will, my life, and my clutter? If not, what will help me make this decision?

When you make the decision to turn your will and your life over to the care of your Higher Power, then you are ready to proceed to Step 4.