As we continue our journey to Step 2, we have already had a glimpse of a Higher Power working in our lives, through the 12 Step program, and through the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. I came to understand that my personal beliefs about my Higher Power were unique and personal, which was the way it was meant to be. My Higher Power is the God of my understanding. This isn't a religious program; it is a spiritual program set up in a way that everyone with his or her diverse beliefs can utilize. My Higher Power only wants the best for me. Now through the active process of Step 2, I was competent to release the binding grips of fear and insecurity that hindered my forward progress.

Our belief in God may possibly be different from others; however, the ultimate reality is that help is accessible to those who seek out. As we surrender and become open and eager for change to occur, our Higher Power, and our personal understanding of God will emerge and bring us out of our insanity, releasing us from the grips of fear. The Fellowship has countless walks of life, various people with diverse religious backgrounds, in addition to atheists and agnostics. So don't be deterred that the Fellowship has a specific group understanding of God because that isn't the case. Your belief in a Higher Power can be private, and it should be. Our members don't have to choose among our religion, or our search for recovery because we can have either. Always know that the Fellowship is a spiritual program that uses universal spiritual principles and practices for the foundation of our recovery. It has been proven, and it unquestionably works, I know from personal experience. If it wasn't for the 12 Step program, I would probably be dead, and for that I am everlastingly indebted.

When I completed working Step 1, I was in a state of total powerlessness. I couldn't surmount this disease under my own power. I urgently needed a Higher Power to show me the way. After surrendering my will, I had to become willing to permit God to work His miracles in my life. I had undergone a 100% change in all aspects of my life. No longer did I have to rely on my own power to overcome the obstacles that recovery handed me. I began to "Let Go and Let God" take charge of my life. As I noticed and observed all of the miracles of recovery in others and in myself, my faith matured, my hope increased, and the knowledge essential to stay clean and serene was revealed.

In Step 2, we come to accept as true that God can convert us into spiritual
beings, devoid of all apprehension, misery, and failure. Increasing spiritual expansion leads to enhanced awareness and clarification in our journey. The more we seek righteousness and clearness of mind, the greater our personal improvement. The routes to victory are countless with the help of our Higher Power showing us the way. Perplexity no longer torments us as we take each step decisively forward. The more I became God-centered, the more my life reflected positive growth. Once I began seeking the knowledge to reside in accordance with God's Will, the greater my development became.

When God entered my life, I discovered that acceptance was a trait that brought me peace of mind. I was able to accept the life I lived in the past, the life I was living, and the endless opportunities of the life that awaits. My reachable horizons expanded, allowing me to achieve goals that were not obtainable in my active addiction. Through patience and dedication, I took a step resolutely forward, always seeking help and guidance from my ever-present Higher Power. When I faced life's challenges and difficulties, I always turned to God for the strength and energy that I needed to overcome the perils of daily life. Never once has God given me too much to handle. My life has never been the same.

Optimistic anticipation increased during the 2nd Step as I came to believe that this power greater than myself could direct me towards positive growth. Greater awareness and understanding filled my vision through becoming more God-centered, and less self-centered. Through time, I came to realize that God has always been with me. The caring, loving Hand of God came back into my life because I let Him in. I came to believe that only through God would I become whole again. From that point on, I let go of my shortcomings, my fears, and all of my negative traits. True recovery started emerging from the depths of my spirit. I started to transform into a spiritual being, not a person of sin. I discovered through personal experience and observation that by talking about God, and through personal reflection, I was able to learn more about this Higher Power. In the rooms of the Fellowship, I found hope, inspiration and understanding of this divine Essence that I had put my trust in. Also, after working Step 2, I learned that false pride and arrogance would only cause destruction and chaos. My ego couldn't stand in the way if I was to continue moving forward in my recovery.

For us to come to believe that a power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity, we are equipped with tools that can enhance our understanding of God, and help us to gain a better relationship with our loving Higher Power. One tool is the process of meditation. Meditation is used to expand our awareness of the spiritual realm, and all that it entails. We come into connection with our
inner being, we re-align ourselves with truth, we get to explore the life of the spirit, which is, in itself, life. Through meditation, we can envision our direction, and live out the possible outcomes before any action is made. We still our minds, releasing all negative thought patterns, and we enter the spiritual world, devoid of insanity and hindrances.

In the meditation process, we establish conscious contact with God as we allow His Will to flow into our essence. Our new, improved conscious can initiate positive influence to drive us towards personal growth and ongoing recovery. For me, I sit down and relax, stilling my mind, while releasing all stress. I notice the marvelous wonders on nature, and all living things as Divine in essence. My mind becomes free, and I come into contact with God. Answers are revealed. Strength and energy fill me as I am shown the way. There becomes no question as to which direction I should take. The knowledge of God's Will is revealed. Peace of mind and assurance envelope me, and all is well. It is reassuring to know that whatever happens on my journey in recovery, good will prevail. A greater understanding of myself, of God, and of life will result from always seeking God's Will, and the power to carry it out.

God's harmony is without fault, refusing thoughts and behaviors not in agreement with His excellence. I am now free to strive towards my goals in confidence and trust that my labors will now be in vain. Resentments, guilt, shame, dishonor, regret, hopelessness, fear, weakness, doubt, negativity and confusion removes itself from our being as we constantly maintain constant contact with our Higher Power. The Spiritual Principles of the program replaces the fear we abide in, and gives us the courage to move onward in our recovery, uninhibited by negative qualities that plagued us in our active addiction. Spiritual principles are used in our personal growth. Such principles as honesty, acceptance, patience, surrender, love, faith, courage, strength, open-mindedness and willingness can be used to assist us in our forward growth. Commitment and devotion to move onward in our recovery is necessary for continuous growth to occur.

Success awaits us as we use our newfound strength and positive direction by maintaining conscious contact with God, by allowing God's love to penetrate our perimeters, and by being open and willing to follow in the direction that God leads us. With God's direction, our drive can propel us towards success. Life is more fulfilling and joyous because we are now able to trust God with the things that we have no control over. So let our journey commence amidst the spiritual realm, and let us find meaning, purpose, and truth as we follow in the direction that God leads us. Without spiritual growth, progressive recovery would be impossible. Good luck. I hope that all of you come to believe that a
power greater that yourself can restore you to sanity.

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