

HIGHER POWER

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If we were able to stay sober and manage our lives on our own will power, it would not be necessary to have a Higher Power. Our experience clearly shows that we have failed utterly in both cases. Many of us tried to respond to the pleas of others to stay sober. We attempted to be better spouses, better employees, a better partner, and better children to our parents. At times we convinced ourselves that if we truly loved someone we should be able to stay sober. Each time we were relying on our will power. As a result of failing, we concluded we needed to seek power from some source other than human power.

Here resistance tends to surface. Some of us enter recovery with a punishing God concept. We may have been told that God had to be this or that. Maybe we were taught that we would be punished if we didn't do things according to certain dogma. Some of us wanted absolutely nothing to do with an organization that proclaimed God was at the center of it. It caused us to bristle with antagonism, to resist, and to withdraw from such concepts.

What we did not consider was that we could have a God of our own understanding, a Higher Power of our own design. Some of us resisted this, believing we had no right to do such a thing. But once again, we realized that this attitude was simply relying on our old ideas and again resulted in disaster.

At this point, all that was necessary was a willingness to believe. No one demanded that we believe in anything. But rather, being *willing to believe* in some kind of Power, some kind of God, some type of Higher Power was all that was necessary. Essentially we were being asked to have an open mind.

We realized that this Power could be anything we chose as long as it was more powerful than us. It did not matter what we called it. We could refer to it as God, Jesus, Allah, Buddha, Great Spirit, The Universe, Creator, or any other name we chose. We were deciding to establish a relationship with some kind of God, some kind of Power of our own understanding.

It became apparent that when we heard the word "God", it simply meant a God of our own understanding, our Higher Power. This God of our understanding did not need to make sense to anyone else. It only had to make sense to us. Our belief in some kind of God, a Creator, or a Higher Power did not need to match the beliefs of our sponsor, our partners, our friends, or others in H.A. It became apparent that this was a personal choice and no one could decide what we should or should not believe. What was most essential was that we were willing to have an open mind and have a willingness to believe.