**Step 2**

**We came to believe a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity and inner peace.**

***Step Two is a very important turning point on the road to recovery. This pivot forces*** us to make a choice between relying on the psychological or the spiritual. For us, the spiritual is the true road to healing even though you will find us using and even endorsing psychological methods. Why do we even have to choose? These 12 Steps are designed to allow us to get a relationship with and help from a Power greater than ourselves, a process that is beyond the psychological. It is our spirit that needs healing first; then we can help our psyche to heal.

How do we begin the spiritual journey? It starts here with Step Two. There are many ways that we human beings form beliefs about ourselves and about the world. This step says that those of us who have worked this step have come to believe in a Power greater than ourselves. Acquiring this belief requires ***actively*** ***seeking*** a Higher Power. This very act of looking will begin to change us and allow us to see things in a different way. As we continue our seeking, we will find that little by little we are becoming conscious of something greater than ourselves. We begin to see connections where we saw none before. We begin to have a sense of hope even though our outward circumstances may not have changed. We begin to see ourselves as a part of rather than apart from. We begin to believe.

When we did Step One, we admitted that we were powerless over the trauma and its effects and that our lives had become unmanageable. We may have come to the realization of how little power we do have over people, places, and things. At this point one could cynically say, "since I am powerless over so much, most everything is a power greater than myself." Psychologically true, but spiritually it misses the point. The Power spoken of in this step is a Power that is available to you to tap into and use for your healing. It is a Power that can change you from the inside out, ***your*** Higher Power.

The wording of the step easily divides it into three segments. First is, “We came to believe”. This wording implies that we did not start out believing, but that, through a process involving work, willingness and time, we come to believe. Do not be discouraged if you are not at this moment believing. You always have the choice and the capacity to come to believe.

Note the first word is, “We”, not “I”. We need and deserve help from others who have been here, other recovering people. We all deserve help. Ask for it, in recovery meetings or from individuals who have a recovery that is appealing to you.

How do we come to believe? The first, though perhaps not most obvious way for trauma survivors is to see how this has worked in other people's lives. Look not only within the program but also within your community. You will find people of faith who have used their Higher Power, usually identified as God, to help them overcome great obstacles. This has been true throughout the history of mankind. Secondly, start actively seeking your Higher Power on a daily basis. You can work with your sponsor or recovery partner on ways that have worked for them.

The next segment, the words, “a Power greater than ourselves”, takes more work. Some of us already have a concept of and relationship with a Higher Power. If so, great, and we can use this Step to strengthen it. The rest of us get to identify what we really believe at this moment. Recovery, Steps and open mindedness promote change and a recovery that is dynamic. There are countless ways to intellectually and psychologically look for a Higher Power; but we are on a spiritual quest. Getting to meetings where the topic is, “Who or what is your Higher Power” or “How did ***You*** do Step Two” or something comparable, can help. Reading about and talking with others about how they found their Higher Power can help. Whatever you have to do, just do it! First, get a concept, and then a relationship with your Higher Power, and both will grow!

Most of us find that we must trust and continue seeking while we work this Step and the subsequent ones, often returning to and rereading Step Two. Recovery is a process, not an event. The process is difficult and requires hard work along with patience and allowing it to work us, to be internalized. Most of us accept pieces of recovery little by little.

The step continues with, "could restore us to sanity and inner peace". Really? Yes, really. Those of us who have done trauma recovery in this manner have found remarkable healing benefits. Although not perfect, and certainly not instant, we nevertheless find ourselves to be profoundly changed. We react differently to old triggers and situations. We are comfortable within our own skin most of the time.

Focus on the word, “could”. This step says “could restore us to sanity and inner peace” not “would”. We have to do our part of accepting the restoration to sanity and receiving inner peace! Our Higher Power does not force us to accept recovery. This ***acceptance*** of a new way of life is crucial to our recovery.

A few people question the word “sanity” or the concept of being restored to sanity, as it implies we are insane now and have been sane in the past. The effects of trauma are profound and cause thoughts and behaviors that seem insane. We may have forgotten how normal, healthy people live, if we ever knew. Our insanity is internal. We may look good on the outside and be in constant fear, anxiety, depression, and uncertainty on the inside. That’s craziness! Insanity! Restoration to sanity means different things to different people, but inner peace is the same for all of us. We deserve both, sanity and inner peace, so we work this step diligently and consistently.