THE SECOND WAVE LIFE

Chapter 3 Overview: Being Open to Accept Help

Advisor Reference Overview | Based on The Second Wave Life: Finding Purpose, Impact and Fulfillment, Post-Exit by Andrew Williams

Chapter focus: A business exit is one of the most significant transitions an owner can face. Chapter 3 challenges the self-reliance that often serves entrepreneurs well in business but can become a barrier when they need trusted guidance, perspective, and support preparing for what comes next.

Chapter at a Glance

Chapter 3 explores why successful entrepreneurs may resist asking for help during an exit. Williams cites a 2011 Exit Planning Institute study reporting that many entrepreneurs regretted selling their companies, with reasons including unmet objectives, lack of understanding about available options, and no plan for life after the exit.

The chapter argues that the issue is not simply a lack of time or resources. Many owners either do not know what kind of help is available, do not know whom to trust, or have been conditioned to solve problems independently. Williams frames this as a mindset challenge that must be addressed before an owner can fully engage in the personal work of transition.

Core Themes

1. Self-reliance can become a barrier

Entrepreneurs often succeed because they are resourceful, independent, and accustomed to figuring things out. That same strength can make it difficult to seek guidance during a complex personal and business transition.

2. Owners may not know what help looks like

Some owners are unaware that specialized support exists, while others are unsure whom to trust. This uncertainty can delay preparation until the transition becomes more immediate.

3. Exit planning involves more than transaction mechanics

The chapter presents the exit as a complicated and emotional life transition, not merely a financial or legal event. Preparation can require trusted counsel for both the business side and the owner-side transition.

Core Themes, Continued

4. Endings are difficult to confront

Williams suggests that people naturally avoid thinking about endings. For an owner, asking for help with an exit can make the end of the business-owner chapter feel more real, which can lead to postponement or avoidance.

5. The transition can feel deeply personal

The chapter compares leaving a business to handing over something the owner has built and cared for deeply. This helps explain why logical preparation alone may not address the emotional weight of the transition.

6. The mindset should shift from ending to beginning

The chapter reframes the exit as the beginning of a new stage rather than simply the end of the current one. The Second Wave Process is positioned as a structured way to have the conversations and do the work needed to move toward that next chapter.

7. The owner does not have to navigate the transition alone

The chapter closes by emphasizing that the owner is more likely to achieve a strong outcome when willing to accept support and recognize that purpose extends into relationships with family, employees, and others.

> Central idea for advisors: The willingness to accept help is itself part of personal readiness. An owner who is accustomed to solving every problem alone may first need permission to treat the transition as something that deserves reflection, trusted counsel, and a structured process.

What the Advisor Should Listen For

- The owner repeatedly says they can figure the transition out on their own.
- The owner has not assembled trusted advisors or is uncertain whom to involve.
- The owner is comfortable discussing valuation, tax, or transaction details but avoids personal questions about life after the business.
- The owner postpones planning because talking about the exit makes the ending feel too real.
- The owner has strong business objectives but no clear personal objectives for the next chapter.
- The owner appears to view asking for help as weakness rather than as preparation for a major transition.

Advisor Conversation Prompts

- Who do you currently trust to help you think through the business and personal sides of this transition?
- Which parts of the exit do you feel comfortable handling yourself, and where might an outside perspective be useful?
- What makes asking for help easy or difficult for you?
- Are there parts of the transition you may be avoiding because they make the end of ownership feel more real?
- What would you want a trusted advisor or guide to help you clarify before you make a major decision?
- What would change if you viewed this transition as the beginning of a new chapter rather than simply the end of the business-owner chapter?

How Chapter 3 Connects to Personal Readiness

Within the InfusionOS Personal Readiness Methodology, Chapter 3 helps advisors recognize that an owner must first be willing to engage in the process before the deeper work can be effective. Personal readiness depends not only on insight, but also on openness to reflection, conversation, and appropriate professional support.

Chapter 3 Concept	Personal Readiness Connection
Entrepreneurs may resist asking for help	Advisors may need to create a low-pressure environment where reflection and guidance feel useful rather than intrusive.
Owners may not know what support exists	The advisor can help organize resources, specialists, and conversations without attempting to fill every professional role.
People avoid talking about endings	Personal-readiness conversations can reframe the exit around what the owner is moving toward, not only what they are leaving.
The transition is emotional as well as technical	The owner may need time, space, and trusted conversations to process identity, relationships, and purpose alongside transaction planning.
Purpose extends beyond the owner	Family, employees, and other stakeholders become part of the personal-readiness picture, setting up the chapters that follow.

Advisor Takeaway

Chapter 3 gives advisors a useful way to address owner resistance without forcing a decision. The goal is not to make the owner dependent on advisors. It is to help them recognize that a major transition deserves the same willingness to seek expertise, perspective, and structured support that they would apply to other important business decisions.

Suggested Use in the Advisor Portal

Use this overview as a quick reference before or after reading Chapter 3. It can help advisors prepare for conversations with owners who are hesitant to seek help, resistant to discussing the personal side of transition, or uncertain about what support they need. It is not a substitute for reading the complete chapter or completing the related Personal Readiness training.

Source: Andrew Williams, The Second Wave Life: Finding Purpose, Impact and Fulfillment, Post-Exit, Chapter 3: "Being Open to Accept Help."

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