Essential
12 Step
Recovery

STEPS
BY THE
BIG BOOK

7th Revision

...We are building an arch through which we shall walk...free...at last. **(75: 3)**

In a friendly, focused group of sponsors, sponsees, and others in recovery we Study and Practice the Twelve Steps as originally described in the text, ***Alcoholics Anonymous***

Essential 12 Step Recovery

Practice These Principles (60: 0)

STEPS
BY THE
BIG BOOK

Our group study supports the pass-it-on process of one alcoholic talking with another. This workbook is for sponsors and sponsees who want to work through the Steps together, and for those in recovery who want to go through the Steps again.

Together, We Can Do It!

This guide and website are not official resources of Alcoholics Anonymous. You may contact AA at Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, www.alcoholics-anonymous.org

Seventh revision September, 2010

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In addition to many downloads, copies of this workbook have been shipped to at least nine foreign countries and to over half of the states.

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[While free of charge, an optional contribution ($15) toward printing and distribution costs is appreciated.]

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Steps by the Big Book

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The 12 STEPS of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

[Optional: **the point** ; Spiritual Principles]

STEP 1 **We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.** [Honesty I have a problem!]

STEP 2 **Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.** [Hope There's help for my problem.]

STEP 3 **Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.** [Trust I make a commitment to follow ALL of the suggestions.]

STEP 4 **Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves**.
[Courage Who am I?]

STEP 5 **Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.** [Integrity I share who I am with someone else.]

STEP 6 **Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.**
[Willingness As a result of Step 4, I see things about myself I would like to change.]

STEP 7 **Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.**
[Humility I start trying to change!]

STEP 8 **Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.** [Compassion As a result of Step 4, I make a list of people that I mistreated, or for whom I had ill feelings.]

STEP 9 **Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.** [Justice If possible, I mend things with these people so that I can get rid of my bad feelings.]

STEP 10 **Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.** [Perseverance I look at ME daily. How am I doing: physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually?]

STEP 11 **Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.** [Spiritual awareness I continue to grow as a human being daily.]

STEP 12 **Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**
[Service I try to help other alcoholics/addicts, and to practice what I have learned in all areas of my life.]

INTRODUCTION

Study and Practice

How can we alcoholics in recovery live *happy, joyous, and free*? (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, page 133: paragraph 0)

Alcoholics Anonymous is the life changing program formed by two desperate alcoholics in 1935. In the Big Book, as the text *Alcoholics Anonymous* is known, we read the written words of the first 100 men and women of AA as they were put in the way of a spiritual awakening. Where did their words come from? What were their practices of the day by day disciplines that became the principles of the 12 Steps? How did they do it?

The Steps are suggested guides for recovery. There is no rule that says anyone has to do them, and there is no regulation about how they should be done. This Steps by the Big Book workbook is for those who *are willing to grow along spiritual lines* (60: 1) by studying the first 103 pages of the Big Book while actually doing the Steps. Our goal is to study the Steps as a friendly, focused group, and work them as the authors of the Big Book described. We wish to make the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous part of our lives by collaborating with a power greater than ourselves – an inner knowing, our own best and highest nature. To this end we ask ourselves two primary questions:

-(Study) What do the Big Book authors say about the Steps?

-(Practice) What does the Big Book say to each one of us about our own actual practice of the principles of the Steps in our daily lives?

Some of us in the recovering community in the Brattleboro, Vermont, area found that we did better studying the Big Book as a group rather than on our own. It is our belief that the only wrong way to work the Steps is alone. Together we can do it! The work of this group study supports the pass-it-on process of one alcoholic talking with another. This workbook is for those in recovery who want to go through the Steps again; or freshen up on their Steps prior to working with a sponsee; or for sponsors and sponsees who want to progress through the Steps together. The only requirements are to show up, study the Big Book, and do each Step. This guide comes from these experiences. This is only an introduction to the spiritual riches of the Big Book's directions to the 12 Steps. We hope this manual is useful throughout recovery, whether one is working the Steps for

the first time, or has followed the Steps for many years. Perhaps your group may craft its own manual, the better to reflect the warmth and strength of the *safe harbor* found in the 12 Steps.[*12&12*, 35:2] If appropriate, simply say your own addiction in place of alcohol.

Your Group

Please be aware that everything in this workbook comes from our experience, strength, and hope. Every process and suggestion in this workbook is optional.

Our Steps by the Big Book group sessions are not official AA meetings because we limit enrollment to a specific number of participants.

- Your group can be of any size or composition. An even number of participants, perhaps from 2 to 16, allows members of the group to work in pairs as "buddies." A group may be simply one sponsor and one sponsee.
- Agree on a purpose, plan and session format of the Steps by the Big Book group, and that in general the group will stick to the schedule.
- Agree that each member attends every session if possible, commits to read the text and respond to the session questions, and in fact DOES each Step as it is encountered. (Fifth Steps are not shared at the sessions.)
- Agree that each member of the group contacts one or more members (buddies) and/or a sponsor regularly between sessions.
- Agree that group members can expect to spend at least as much time on reading, writing and contact with buddies between sessions as in group time.
- Agree on a date by which participants may leave or new members may join the group after it begins.
- Agree that group members will not drink or use during the course.

Group Norms

While there are no rules in AA, there are written Traditions and unwritten norms (i.e. identifying oneself as an alcoholic in meetings). In order to ensure that your group runs smoothly, we suggest considering these questions:

- Will start and end times for the sessions be honored?
- Will one group member chair the entire process, or will group members take turns chairing the sessions?
- Will absolute confidentiality and anonymity about the group be practiced?
- Will readings be read at the sessions, or should the readings be completed in advance?
- Is each group member expected to speak and share personal writings at group sessions? (It is suggested that members do their Fifth Step outside of the sessions with a sponsor or buddy.)

- Will group members consider not speaking a second time until all have had a chance to share first?
- Will someone serve as a friendly timekeeper?

Working with a Sponsor or Buddy

Our group experience has shown that it is useful for group participants to work closely with one or more members of the group ("buddies"), in a manner that compliments working with a sponsor.

The support and stimulus of working the Steps with a buddy, a sponsor, or both, leads to personal growth and change. We read the Big Book chapters or selections together. Together, we work on our reflections and writings about the focus questions and inventories. Together we get and give support for this process of working the Steps, and for sharing our discoveries, doubts and experiences in the group.

Guide to This Guide

Our reference for this study of the 12 Steps is the first 103 pages of *Alcoholics Anonymous***,** fourth edition, *the basic text* (xi: 2) for the program and fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Big Book (BB) notations are to page and paragraph, as in (64: 0, 1), i.e. (64) page 64; (: 0) the partial paragraph at the top of the page; (1) the first full paragraph on that page; etc. Quotes from the Big Book are in *italics*. (SbBB) refers to this Steps by the Big Book workbook.

Please ignore anything in the group sessions or this workbook that you feel contradicts what you find in the Big Book.

As a study group we will cover:

Preface and Forewords	
"Doctor's Opinion"	Step 1.
Chapter 1. Bill's Story	Step 1
Chapter 2. There Is a Solution	Steps 1 and 2
Chapter 3. More About Alcoholism	Steps 1 and 2
Chapter 4. We Agnostics	Step 2
Chapter 5. How It Works	Steps 3 and 4
Chapter 6. Into Action	Steps 5 through 11
Chapter 7. Working With Others	Step 12

To prepare for the Steps by the Big Book group sessions, we read the Big Book paragraph by paragraph. We pause at commas and stop at periods. We turn the declarative statements of the Big Book into questions for ourselves. We constantly ask, "What does this mean for me in my life?" We then explore these questions with others.

In essence, this manual is a cut-and-paste scrapbook of pithy suggestions – concise and helpful insights that can have an immediate effect on how we study and work the Steps. The session material is drawn from the Big Book, and AA literature, such as *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (*12&12*), with focus questions and comments borrowed verbatim without attribution from meetings, others in recovery, and from a number of published and recorded recovery sources. Any errors that appear in this guide belong to those of us who compiled it.

This workbook is divided into three parts: Part I covers Steps 1, 2 and 3; Part II examines Step 4; Part III looks into Steps 5 through 12. Each of the parts begins with focused meditations/prayers and notes on the Steps in question. Next are the specific sessions on each Step with reflective questions about the Big Book reading. Optional material and sample definitions are in brackets […]. Finally, there are worksheets that are intended to help you focus your writing on each Step. On pages 7 - 9 you will find the basic workbook session outline and an optional suggested group session format.

How a Session May Go

Typically we read the session material on our own and write our responses.

This is a team effort. We meet as a committed group of equals once or twice a week, or as the group sees fit. We open with a time of quiet relaxation, followed by a very brief check-in as to how each member is doing with studying and working the Steps. We read condensed selections from the Big Book on a particular Step, and then for 10 to 15 minutes one group member speaks of her or his personal experience doing this Step by the Big Book process. Every member then shares their writings or reflections on that session's Step work. Discussion is encouraged, as long as we speak out of our own experience. Some groups choose to expand or contract the session material, such as skipping over several sessions in Step 4. We may close with reciting the Step and a meditation or prayer.

An OUTLINE of a typical Study Session

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ -** Individually, and with your sponsor or other group members, study the suggested readings for the Step you are working on.

- **WRITE -** We suggest one or two 15-20 minute writing sessions per day.
  - Write of your own experience working the Step under consideration. Respond to the issues the readings raise for you.
  - Reflect on the focus points in each session and think about writing on three or four, or all of them, as you see fit.
  - Try reading aloud the bulleted focus and reflection comments to help make them stick. Cross them off as you respond to them.
  - Consider completing the worksheets intended to build on what the Big Book says about the practice of each Step.

- **TALK** - Meet with one or more other members of the group or with your sponsor or both to discuss the readings and your written reflections on them.

- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION WITH MEDITATION / PRAYER** - Strive to develop a daily practice of quiet centering before reading and writing. Use whatever meditations or prayers are meaningful to you. (See BB p.13: 4 and Step 11, BB pp. 85-88) [Optional: also see this SbBB workbook p. 14]

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my own practice of this Step?

  - We each reflect together in depth about our own life practices of how we actually live and do the Step in question as illuminated by the Big Book.
  - We each share what we have written.

III DAILY PRACTICE OF 12 STEP PRINCIPLES

  - We each consider our own personal daily practice of the principles of the relevant Step.
  - *The spiritual life is not a theory. <u>We have to live it</u>.* (83: 2)

* *

IV TAKE THE STEP

Since the way people take the Steps in AA is highly personal, we leave it to individual members to decide when they have taken each Step. The Big Book has us consider, *Is our* [Step] *work solid so far?* Can we *answer to <u>our</u> satisfaction*? (75: 3-76: 1) One measure is our own peace of mind. Some groups observe completing each Step by joining hands and reciting the Step, along with selected meditations or prayers.

How might a Study and Group Practice session go?

A group member responds:

Generally speaking, we are people in recovery who come together to work on the Steps because we want to. We are willing to commit to five months or so of weekly sessions. And most stay when we hear about the details of this particular group approach to working the Steps by the Big Book. The workbook can be a little dry and it may seem like drudgery, but it helps to read it out loud like a bedtime story.

We get the importance of closely reading the Big Book outside of the group sessions with a buddy and maybe other group members, and/or a sponsor. We take what that book has to say personally. It becomes our book. We spend time each day in quiet reflection, and write frankly about what the Big Book and the workbook bring up for us. Those who are not writers talk it out with their buddy and/or sponsor.

The weekly group sessions are friendly and we try to begin on time, sitting in a circle.

~Someone familiar with the process may chair the early sessions. Later we can each take turns chairing for three sessions or so in a row, and we might all agree to change the format as needed. We say which Step we are covering and what will happen that particular session. We may open with the Third Step prayer. The silent quiet time is refreshing and helps us to "be there."

~We check-in one after the other, keeping it short. We often read aloud the Steps by the Big Book workbook notes and session selections for that Step.

~Either the chairperson or someone they choose starts off by reviewing some favorite short selections from the Big Book, reading a sentence or paragraph or a few pages. Then they read part of what they have written in response and speak about their personal work on that Step according to the Big Book.

~Others carry on by reading aloud their own writing, or say their reflections. The discussions get lively, yet focus on each person's own working of that Step with the support of all. As the Big Book says, *Cooperate; never criticize. To be helpful is our only aim*. (89: 3)

~If we haven't "finished" a particular Step, we may choose to spend another week on it, or we may agree "good enough" and we stand and grasp hands and recite the Step and often say a prayer from the reading. Together we have "taken" that Step.

~Then we look ahead to the next session, and encourage each other to meet with our buddies, to do the Big Book reading and to do the writing. We may close with the Seventh Step prayer, and we might go out for coffee and head on home.

Optional example of FORMAT outline for a typical Group Practice session.

This is for a 1½ hour session once a week. You may adjust the length of the session to 2 or more hours, add breaks, etc.

- **1st Open on time with focus meditation or prayer such as the Third Step prayer and from 1 to 5 minutes or more of centering silence.**

- **2nd Initial 2 min.: Review agenda for this session.**

- **3rd The SESSION – Approximate group study and practice times:**

  ~10 min.: 30 second check-ins around the group.

  ~15 min.: Review brief selections from the reading.

  ~15 min.: Session chairperson or designated group member may share their writing and experience with this reading and this Step according to the Big Book.

  ~40 min. Discussion (40 min. per 1½ hour session. 70 min. per 2 hour session, etc.): Group members may share their writing and talk about questions and worksheets on actually working the Step in question by the Big Book.

  When ready, take the Step together.

- **4th Final 3 min. Review next session's agenda. Encourage reading and writing between sessions. Urge meeting with one's buddy and/or sponsor.**

- **5th Close on time with meditation or prayer such as the Seventh Step prayer.**

IF I am abstinent
& desire recovery...

...**&** I am willing to
grow along
spiritual lines...

...**then** I may commit with
others to a friendly, focused
Steps by the Big Book
study group

"Easy does it,
But Do It!"

MY JOB (as best I can,*
for ~2 – 3 hours a week)
STUDY ON MY OWN
Daily* **relax and quiet time**
Daily* **read** Big Book selections
& Step by Big Book questions

Daily* **WRITE**
on Big Book phrases
& Step by Big Book queries
"What these mean in MY life."

Weekly **talk** with Buddy/Sponsor
Weekly **ATTEND**
Steps by Big Book group sessions

Buddy's/Sponsor's JOB
Same as My Job

STUDY WITH BUDDY
Weekly **TALK** with
buddy/sponsee

Weekly **ATTEND** group session
"Together we can do it!"

OUR JOB **"Relax! Our reasonable best is good enough."**
All **ATTEND** every **Steps by the Big Book session***
GROUP PRACTICE SESSION
Begin on time / **Review** the session agenda
Quiet time - meditation-prayer / **Check-in** around circle

Chairperson or other: **Read** part of Big Book selection
Share Writing on Big Book & Steps by Big Book workbook

Others **share Writing and Reflections** in turn
Take Step together

Review next session / closing meditation-prayer / **End on time**

I

PART I

SESSION 1 THROUGH SESSION 7
STEPS 1 – 2 – 3
RELAXATION FOCUS – MEDITATIONS / PRAYERS

3RD STEP MEDITATION / PRAYER
God [of our understanding]***, I offer myself to Thee – to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always.*** **(63: 2)**

7TH STEP MEDITATION / PRAYER
My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad.
I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. **(76: 2)**

11TH STEP MEDITATION / PRAYER
We ask God [of our understanding] ***to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self seeking motives.*** **(86: 2)**
Thy will be done**. (88: 0)**

SERENITY PRAYER
God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change,
Courage to change the things we can,
And wisdom to know the difference**. (*12&12*, p. 125: 2)**

What might a day in recovery look like?

ONE GROUP MEMBER'S DAILY DISCIPLINES:

- Upon awakening, read Daily Reflections (for example).
- Practice relaxation focus with meditation and prayer.
- Don't drink or drug.
- Go to a meeting; join a group; get active.
- Call your sponsor, contact another member of fellowship.
- Read from the Big Book; concentrate on one of the Steps.
- Complete a daily inventory (Step 1; Step 4; Step 10)
- Pause and ask for help.
- Have fun enjoying a sober activity.

ANOTHER GROUP MEMBER'S RELAXATION PRACTICE

[Optional: *As though lying on a sunlit beach, let us relax and breathe deeply of the spiritual atmosphere....* (*12&12*, 100: 1)]

1. Relax the body:
~Sit quietly and comfortably, letting the body arrive here in this place.
~Close your eyes, deeply relax all of your muscles from your feet up to your face.
~Let all body sensations come and let them go. Feel your natural body embody you.

2. Relax the breath:
~Take three deep breaths, then let the breath be here.
~You may breathe through your nose. As you inhale, feel the cool of the air on your nostrils. Sense the sharpness in the back of your throat. As you exhale, note the softness as you follow the breath all the way out. You may repeat a word or phrase or prayer silently on each out-breath. For example some repeat, "Ah well…. Ah well…. Ah well…."

3. Relax the mind:
~ Let the thoughts come, and let the thoughts go.
~When you notice the mind wandering (it will !), just notice it and passively bring the attention back to the breath.
~Rest in that space at the end of breathing out, before the next breath.

When you finish, sit quietly for a few moments before you open your eyes and stand up. Practice for approximately 20 minutes every day or 3-4 times a week.

NOTES ON STEPS 1 – 2 – 3

It meant destruction of self-centeredness. (14: 1)

STEP 1 …*foundation*… (12: 4)

> *No words can tell of the loneliness and despair I found in that bitter morass of self-pity. … I had met my match. I had been overwhelmed. Alcohol was my master*. (Bill's Story, 8: 1)

Like Bill, we are alcoholics, and we have hit bottom. The problem is our mental obsession that leads us to take a drink, and our resulting physical compulsion to drink to excess. Our minds and lives are unmanageable; we must surrender. Working Step 1 begins when we become abstinent. We have to stop our personal addictive alcoholic behaviors so that our continued acting out does not hinder our surrender. If we are not drinking today, then we must abstain from that particular addictive thought or behavior that robs us of peace of mind.

This is a disease of isolation and loneliness. We are prisoners of our self-sufficiency, isolated inside. We admit we need to grow and that we are not free. We are *people who appear to be sure of themselves but are actually eaten alive with fear inside*. (193: 2) If anxiety is the existential basis of our addiction, then we must alter our fear, remorse, shame and guilt in order to find happiness so that we do not have to go back to drinking. [Shame: feeling disgrace for who we are in our essence.] [Guilt: feeling disgrace for how we have behaved.] As recovering alcoholics, we have to do something about being *restless, irritable and discontented* (xxviii: 4) or we will drink again. Our experience is that we do not become whole without a solution beyond ourselves. The point is to experience a *personality change sufficient to bring about recovery*. (567: 1) Human nature, the 'self' and 'instincts' are not the problem. The problem is how we habitually react to people, places, and things in our instinctual and self-absorbed ways, such that we risk drinking or having an emotional dry bender. How may we come to have a *profound alteration in* [our] *reaction to life?* (567: 4) How may we be free?

Recovery is an individual alcoholic's experience of the transformative power that comes from actually working the Steps – from actually practicing the principles of the

program of action of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. Out of our discontent with the way we are, we study and practice the 12 Step principles as a daily discipline in order to achieve and maintain spiritual balance. Rather than argue with the various hypotheses of AA, we experiment by doing the Steps as written and see what the results are. A sponsor is our essential guide through the 12 Steps. It is not about us or our opinions; it is about our action of working and living the Steps on a daily basis. The spiritual power, which comes from the practice of the 12 Steps within the AA fellowship, can move us to be sober and live with serenity and peace of mind.

STEP 2 …*cornerstone*… (47: 2)

> *Why don't you choose your own conception of God*? … *It was only a matter of being willing to believe in a Power greater than myself. Nothing more was required of me to make my beginning*. (Bill's Story, 12: 2, 12: 4)

In AA we find hope that we can be restored to sanity, we can become whole. We can be well, or more well. We can rediscover the intrinsic goodness of our very being. This hope of Step 2 follows the desperation of Step 1 as the dawn follows the dark.

If our problem is that we have a body which will die if we drink, and we have a mind which compels us to take that drink, then we are powerless indeed. We are without power. Yet the fact that we and others like us are not drinking or using, one day at a time, is proof of the action in our own lives of a solution – a power greater than any one of us. Step 2 reminds us we are crazy to think that we need to be in control or that we can do it alone. We no longer need to live solo with the pain and insanity that have been our nature. Insanity is when we lack *perspective* (5: 5) and things are out of *proportion* (37: 1), and when we repeat the same mistakes over and over expecting different results

AA is a spiritual, not a religious, program. Spirituality is what we do, religion is what we say. Spirituality is what happens to us when we work the Steps within the AA fellowship community. Step 2 does not say: We believe IN a power that WOULD restore us. Step 2 describes the solution as we *came to believe THAT a power greater than ourselves COULD restore us to sanity*. (59: 2) The emphasis is not on who or what this power is, but on what this power can <u>do</u>. We begin to turn inward to find a higher power that works and feels safe. A group, the practice of the spiritual principles of the 12 Steps, or our own understanding of a higher power can qualify as the power greater than us.

STEP 3 *…keystone…* (62: 3)

> *I humbly offered myself to God, as I then understood Him, to do with me as He would. I placed myself unreservedly under His care and direction. I admitted for the first time that of myself I was nothing; that without Him I was lost*. (Bill's Story, 13: 2)

Heard in a meeting: "The problem is **Me!** The solution is **Beyond Me!** And the program of action is **Let It!**"

"Is the stone heavy? Put it down and rest." "Rest in just being - rather than 'doing'."

The central affirmative action in Step 3 is a decision. We become willing to take action to do something different. We find that our troubled minds arise from our own self-centered reactions to life events. (62: 2) We may loosen our grip on our fearful sense of self. We can stop exhausting ourselves as if we were in charge of making things happen in this world. We were never meant to do it alone.

We are asked to turn our will and lives over to the care of what we do not understand. Yet we may define our *own conception* of this power, as we may for our own understandings of *other spiritual expressions* and *spiritual terms*. (47: 1) Working Step 3 will help us discover what works best for us. And by working Step 3 we are allowing *an unsuspected inner resource* (567-568) to care for us, not control us or conduct our lives for us. We are not giving anything away; we are not struggling to become something we are not. We are learning to cooperate with what we always were. We are complete and whole as we are; the stuff we mixed in was to survive. We are aligning ourselves with *a Spirit of the Universe* (46: 2) – one with our own best and highest nature.

Spirituality is our tool based on personal experience, which gets better the more we experiment with it and use it. Step 3 reflects a spiritual progression through practice from hope to faith to trust. The decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of a higher power of our own understanding is one we may make each day, one day at a time.

The authors of the Big Book call Step 3 the *keystone* (62: 3) to the *wonderfully effective spiritual structure* (47: 2) of a spiritual awakening that is being built by the discipline of the practice of the 12 Steps within the fellowship. How do we work Step 3? We do it by working Steps 4 – 12.

SESSION 1

Preface and Forewords

***A wonderfully effective <u>spiritual structure</u> can be built.* (47: 2)**

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read the Table of Contents, Preface, and the Forewords to the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Editions of the Big Book**.** Many will read the Foreword to *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (*12&12*) as well.

- **WRITE** Consider the focus questions relating to the readings, and write reflective answers to them, as you see fit. Cross off the bulleted comments as you take them in. Include your own questions and observations, and explore your doubts as well as your certainties in detail and in depth.

- **TALK** Talk with your sponsor and/or buddy about the process you are about to undertake.

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of the 12 Steps?

- We discuss the purpose, plan and session format of this Steps by the Big Book group course. Consider that each member is expected to not only talk about but to <u>do</u> each of the Steps and, if possible, to attend every session with the team.
- This is a commitment, a team effort. Together we can do it!
- We discuss how the Big Book readings influence our own recovery process.

Points of Focus and Reflection

1.) Contents -A repeating *mighty purpose and rhythm* (10: 3) of the Steps and of the Big Book can be seen even on the Contents page (Consider page v).

- 'The Problem' is set out in Doctor's Opinion and Chapter 1. [See 17: 1; 19: 3]
- 'The Solution' is introduced in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. [See also 17: 3; 25: 1]
- 'The Program of Action' is described in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. [See also 9:6; 42: 2]

2.) 1955 Foreword to Second Edition (Consider pp. xv: 3-xvii: 2; xix: 1; xxi: 0)

- What do the Big Book authors mean when they say that, *this is but a beginning, only the augury of a much larger future ahead*? (xv: 2)
- How am I part of that future? What do I know about the story of AA?
- What were the tenets of the Oxford Groups? (xvi: 0) [See also 263: 0]
- What is the *message* of AA? (xvii: 3; xviii: 0; xxi: 0) [See also xvi: 2; 17: 3; 45: 2; 60: 0; 77: 0; 89 :1]
- What are *the principles by which the individual alcoholic could live*? (xix: 1)
- What are the *principles by which AA groups and AA as a whole could survive and function*? (xix: 1)
- What is the alternative to *the high road*? (xxi: 0)

SESSION 2

STEP 1 The Doctor's Opinion

Step 1: We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.

…Physical craving for liquor. **(xxvii: 7 - xxviii: 0)**
***They cannot…differentiate the true from the false*.** **(xxviii: 4)**

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read The Doctor's Opinion. Many will read Step 1 in the *12&12*.

- **WRITE** As part of your Step 1 written inventory begin to write about:
  - Your own definition of each word in this Step, and every Step. Then look up each word individually in the dictionary.
  - Write what each part means to you: We **admit** that we are **powerless** over our **alcoholism-addiction** and that our lives [and minds] have been and are **unmanageable**.
  - "How am I powerless over alcohol? Even if I have been sober for a significant length of time, over what am I powerless?"
  - "How is my life unmanageable today?"

- **TALK** Talk with your sponsor and other members of the group about the readings and your reflections on them.

- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION WITH MEDITATION / PRAYER** You may follow the Big Book and *12&12* suggestions for meditation and prayer, or choose a practice that is in line with your own belief system. The goal is to set aside some quiet reflection time, perhaps 15-20 minutes twice a day.

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 1?

- As we each go about our daily activities, we think about the people, places, and things that are unmanageable, or over which we are powerless. Each day we write: "I cannot control / have no power over_____."
- We also list what we can control and what we do have power over.
- We share our lists with the group.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider pp. xxvi: 3-xxix: 3) Try them out loud. Consider avoiding 'yes' and 'no' rote answers, and responding fully in detail and in depth.
The Problem as understood by Dr. Silkworth in the Doctor's Opinion.

1.) The mental obsession (xxviii: 4) [(L obsession- siege) preoccupation, fixed idea]
2.) The physical compulsion [physical *craving* or *allergy* (xxx: 0), compelled to act]
3.) The using to excess [abuse: *spree* (xxix: 0)], and the need to control our drinking.
4.) The need for a *psychic change*. (xxix: 1, 3) (Also xxvii: 4; xxviii: 2; xxxi: 4)

1.) Mental Obsession [Mind: *unmanageable* (59: 2)]

- How am I affected by Dr. Silkworth's definition of alcoholism as a medical problem? (xxx: 0) [Disease: (L- To lack ease.) Involuntary disability. See 64: 3]
- Did I drink *essentially because* [I] *like the effect produced by alcohol*? (xxviii: 4)
- Have I been *restless, irritable, and discontented*? (xxviii: 4)
- Have I sought *the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks*? (xxix: 0)
- Describe in detail how I succumbed *to the desire again*? (xxix: 0)
- In what ways did I reach the point where I could not differentiate *the true from the false*? (xxviii: 4)
- When did I first experience an abnormal mental obsession with alcohol? Describe.

2.) Physical Compulsion [Body: *powerless* (59: 2)]

- How did I develop the *physical…phenomenon of craving* [*allergy*]? (xxvii: 7 - xxviii: 0,1; xxix: 0, 4; xxx: 1, 5)
- How do I describe my pathological physical reaction to alcohol?
- In what ways has my alcoholic body become as sick as my alcoholic mind? (xxvi: 2)
- What is my understanding of the concept of alcoholism as the *manifestation of an allergy*? (xxviii: 1) [Allergy (Gr allos – strange): An abnormal reaction.]
- How do I feel about the idea of hospitalization? (xxvi: 4; xxviii: 0)
- When did I first experience a physical compulsion or craving for alcohol? Describe.

3.) Drinking to Excess:

- In what ways did I *pass through the well-known stages of a spree, emerging remorseful, with a firm resolution not to drink again*? (xxix: 0)
- In what ways did I repeat this *over and over*? (xxix: 0)
- What are my reflections on the ideas that alcoholism *has never been…permanently eradicated*; and that *the only relief…is entire abstinence*? (xxx: 5)
- When did I first experience the loss of control of my drinking? Describe.

4.) Psychic Change

- What is my understanding of a *psychic change*? (xxix: 1, 3)
- What is meant by being *required to follow a few simple rules*? (xxix: 1)
- Am I aware that, if I have been abstinent from alcohol a while, Step 1 is about my powerlessness over some other behavior or thought-habit that reflects the unmanageability of my life and mind?
- Am I aware that I need to find a way to stop that behavior so that my surrender is not blocked by continued acting out?
- What is of significance to me in this chapter? What do I not agree with?

SESSION 3

STEP 1 Bill's Story

Step 1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.

Upon a <u>foundation</u> of complete willingness…. (12: 4)
***…the mental twist which leads to the first drink of a spree.* (92: 0)**

Step 1 written inventory

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Chapter 1 Bill's Story, pp.1 – 16. Read in the Big Book how in 1934 one of AA's founders, Bill W., learned of the problem, the solution, and the program of action to recover from alcoholism.
  - 1. The **Problem**: From Dr. Silkworth, Bill learned of the medical problem of alcoholism as both a mental and a physical illness. (7:1; xxv-xxxii)
  - 2. The **Solution**: From Dr. Carl Jung, (through Roland H. and Ebby T.) Bill learned of the spiritual solution to the problem as a *necessary vital spiritual experience*. (27: 5; see also 9: 6; 567-8)
  - 3. The **Program of Action**: From the Oxford Group (through Ebby T.), Bill learned of the discipline of practicing a step by step program of principles and action that opens one to the necessary *vital spiritual experiences.* (27: 4) [See also He Sold Himself Short, 263: 0]

- **WRITE** Write down how the matters set forth in Bill's Story reflect your own life.
  - Cross off the bulleted focus and reflection comments as you consider them.
  - Continue writing your Step 1 inventory about your powerlessness over alcohol and how your life is unmanageable.

- **TALK** Speak with your sponsor and other group members about the study group and the Step 1 readings.

- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION WITH MEDITATION / PRAYER**

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 1?

- We review selections from Bill's Story together.
- We each consider sharing our own writings and personal Step 1 stories with the group.
- Rather than 'yes' and 'no' responses, consider answering in detail and with examples.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider 2: 2; 3: 2; 5: 4-6: 1; 8: 1-9: 6; 12: 2-14: 6)

1.) The *Problem* (17: 1)

- What did Bill mean by, *I commenced to forge the weapon…that one day would turn…like a boomerang and…cut me to ribbons*? (2: 2)
- Was there a time for me when *liquor ceased to be a luxury; it became a necessity*? (5: 1)
- Did I think *I could control the situation*? (5: 1)
- Did I ever wonder, *Was I crazy?* (5: 5)
- How does an *appalling lack of perspective* relate to sanity, honesty, or humility? (5: 5) What do sanity, honesty, and humility mean to me? [Optional: *12&12* pp, 48: 0; 58: 1; 72: 2]
- In what specific ways did I feel *the remorse, horror and hopelessness of the next morning*? (6: 1)
- Did I ask, *Should I kill myself*? (6: 1)
- In what ways did I seek *oblivion*? (6: 1)
- In what ways have I felt fear? (6: 2, 7: 0)
- What are my reflections on Dr. Silkworth's proposition that we have been *seriously ill, bodily and mentally*? (7: 1)
- Did I see that *I could not take so much as one drink*? (5: 4)
- Did such *self-knowledge* (7: 2) of the problem of *the insanity of that first drink* (8: 2) alone keep me sober?
- Bill describes taking Step 1 by admitting, *Alcohol was my master*. (8: 1)
- In what ways has alcohol been my master? (8: 1)

2.) The *Solution* (17: 3)

- What is my understanding of the *simple religious idea*? (9: 6)
- What was my reaction to' religion', 'the church', and 'God'? (10: 1)
- How do I react to the suggestion, *Why don't you choose your own conception of God?* (12: 2; 46: 2)
- Bill takes Step 2 when he understands that, *nothing more was required...to make my beginning* than *being willing to believe*. (12: 4)
- Note that Bill was instructed *to sit quietly* and *to test* [his] *thinking by the new God-consciousness within*. (13: 4)

3.) The *Program of Action* (9: 6)

- What is my understanding of the *practical program of action*? (9: 6)
- How did this derive from the non-alcoholic *Oxford Groups of that day*? (xvi: 0; and see 263: 0)
- What are *the essential requirements*, as I understand them? (13: 5 - 14: 0)
- How do I understand, *It meant destruction of self-centeredness*? (14: 1)
- What were the *revolutionary and drastic proposals*? (14: 2)
- Note that Bill essentially takes Step 3 through Step 12 at this time while still in the hospital. [Step 1 (8: 1); Step 2 (12: 4); Steps 3-11 (13: 2-4); Step 12 (1st part 13: 5; 2nd part 14: 5, 6)]

STEP 1 WRITTEN INVENTORY

Step 1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.

Consider these questions, which are borrowed from meetings and recovery literature. Add your own as you see fit. Copy and expand this template in your own notebook. Consider responding in detail with specific examples, rather than rote yes's or no's.

I POWERLESSNESS Body The physical compulsion [compelled to act]
What were all of the types and amounts of alcohol and drugs I used, from my first time to the present? What did it cost me or others – purchases, income, fines? Emotional cost?
-
-

When have I experienced the abnormal physical reaction to alcohol? [‘One drink leads to another.’ Suggestion: Describe the last drink or a similar episode in detail.]
-
-

When did I recognize that I lost control of my drinking? [I drink to excess. I cannot stop when I want to. Heard in a meeting: “When I drink I break out in a binge.”]
-
-

In what ways have I attempted, and have failed, to control my drinking? Did I use alcohol, or did alcohol use me?
-
-

What were the things I did while acting out on my disease that I would never do when focusing on recovery? (ie: destructive behavior, loss of memory and blackouts, being abusive physically or verbally, insane and suicidal behaviors, etc.)
-
-

What would my life be like if I admitted being powerless over alcohol and other dysfunctional behaviors?
-
-

What other aspects of my life am I powerless over?
-
-

In what ways has my disease been active recently? How do I behave compulsively?

STEP 1 WRITTEN INVENTORY

II UNMANAGEABILITY Mind The mental obsession [besieged, haunted] (obsessed with self = self-centeredness)
When and how has my mind told me that one drink will not hurt?
-
-

How did jails or institutions take over the management of my life at different times?
-
-

How am I addicted to changing my mood? What was I trying to change? In what ways am I addicted to looking outside of myself for exterior things to change the way I feel?
-
-

Are there situations that I fear will be so painful that I will drink again?
-
-

How is my addictive thinking and behavior manifested in my life today? Be specific.
-
-

What is it like when I am obsessed with someone or something?
-
-

Do I maintain a crisis mentality, reacting to every challenge as a personal insult? How has this affected my life?
-
-

Do I insist on having my own way? Do I consider the needs of others? How has this behavior/attitude affected my relationships?
-
-

What in my life can I truly manage?
-
-

What managed my life when using, and what manages my life in recovery?
-
-

SESSION 4

STEP 1 & 2 There is a Solution

Step 1 We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable.
Step 2 Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Fellowship… …the powerful cement which binds us. (17: 2)

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read Chapter 2, There is a Solution and Appendix II, Spiritual Experience in the Big Book.

- **WRITE** Continue to write about how you are powerless over alcohol, and why your life is unmanageable (then and now). Respond to at least three or four of the optional focus questions, and to ones of your own.

- **TALK** Talk with your sponsor and other group members about powerlessness.

- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION WITH MEDITATION / PRAYER**

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 1 and Step 2?

- Letting go of the illusion that we can control our addictive behavior on our own is the first step on the way to recovery.
- Only when we realize we cannot control our using do we find a way to change, a way out.
- We each consider sharing our own written reflections on Steps 1 & 2 with the other members of the group. Pick a topic that interests all or several members of the group and engage in a round robin discussion.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider 17: 2-18: 4; 20: 1-23: 1; 25: 1-3; 27: 2-28: 3)

1.) The Power of the Fellowship

- How do I understand the *fellowship* as *the powerful cement which binds us*? (17: 2)
- How have I experienced the *common solution*, the *way out*? (17: 3)
- Did my *alcoholic illness* engulf *all whose lives touch the sufferer's*? (18: 1)
- How is it that I can *win the entire confidence of another alcoholic*? (18: 4)

2.) The Real Alcoholic

- In what ways do I have a *hopeless condition of mind and body*? (20: 1)
- What is my reaction to the idea that a *real alcoholic* is one who loses *all control of his liquor consumption once he begins to drink*? (21: 1)
- Am I a *real alcoholic*? (21: 1) If not, why not? If so, describe fully.
- Did I have control over alcohol?
- What *absurd, incredible and tragic things* did I do while drinking? (21: 2)
- In what respects have I been *dishonest and selfish*? (21: 2)
- Have I been *a real Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*? (21: 2) Describe.
- When have I searched *madly for the bottle*? (22: 0)
- Have I used *a combination of …sedative and liquor*? (22: 0)
- Can I answer *the riddle* of why I took *that one drink*, that *first drink,* over and over? (22: 3; 22: 2; 23: 1)
- How do I respond to the premise that *the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than his body*? (23: 1)
- In what ways do I share *the malady* of the lie, the mental *obsession that somehow, someday* [I can] *beat the game* and take one drink? (23: 2; 22: 2) [See also 326: 2)
- In what specific ways have I *lost the power of choice in drink*? (24: 1)

3.) The Spiritual Experience

- In what ways is my being sober today evidence of having *tapped an unsuspected inner resource* which I may *identify with* [my own] *conception of a Power greater than* [myself]? (567: 4-568: 0)
- In what ways had I *come to believe in the hopelessness and futility of life* as I had been living it? (25: 1) Describe in detail.
- Have I felt I had *but two alternatives:*?
  - *One was to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation…*
  - *…and the other, to accept spiritual help*? (25: 3)
- How does one go about accepting spiritual help? Might one's spiritual life then include *our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs?* (20: 0) Can I accept that the concept of "others" includes me?
- Am I ready for the *self-searching*, the *leveling of* [my] *pride* and the *confession of shortcomings* that *the process requires*? (25: 1) (See also 42:1, 2; 64: 1; 122: 1)
- What was the *certain simple attitude* (27:0) that allowed the *utterly hopeless…drunk* (26: 1, 3) to become a *free man*? ((26: 4; 28: 1) [See 28: 3 *willing and honest enough to try*.]
- How do Dr. Carl Jung's reflections on *vital spiritual experiences* as the solution to our problem apply to my recovery? (27: 4, 5)
- How might William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience* be of use to me? (28: 3)
- Have I experienced the presence of a higher power? Be specific.

SESSION 5

STEP 1 & 2 More About Alcoholism

Step 1. We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.
Step 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

We were alcoholics **(30: 2; see also 60: 2)**

Take Step 1

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read of relapse in Chapter 3, More About Alcoholism.

- **WRITE** Write the story of your last drink in detail or tell aspects of your story through several drinking episodes. .
  - You may focus on these or other points in your written reflections:

-The Starting Problem: Our mental obsession. ('The Lie') There came the time that we were stone cold sober and we picked up even though we had years of experience about where it would lead us. *The subtle insanity which precedes the first drink*. (40: 2)
-The Stopping Problem: Our physical compulsion (craving, "allergy"). That once we put the drink into our system there was never enough, we could not stop.
-How we drank to excess: Why? Because we are alcoholic. (30: 2) [See also 342: 1]

- **TALK** Talk with your sponsor or with other members of your group.

- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION WITH MEDITATION / PRAYER**

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 1 and Step 2?
We talk with other group members about relapse. Did any of the stories in this chapter move us more than others did? Have we ever faced a situation where only our higher power stood between us and a drink? (43: 3) Have we ever relapsed? Describe in depth.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider 32: 2-34: 2; 35: 1-38: 2; 39: 2-43: 3)

1.) The Man of Thirty

- Do I have a *reservation of any kind,* [or] *any lurking notions that someday* [I] *will be immune to alcohol*? (33: 1)
- Was I *astonished at* [my] *inability to stop*? (33: 3)
- Had I *lost the power to choose*?(34: 2)
- Like the man of thirty, did I have an *utter inability to leave it alone*? (34: 2)

2.) Jim

- What *mental states* are *the crux of the* [drinking] *problem*? (35: 0)
- Can I identify with Jim who *found himself drunk* even after accepting what others *knew of alcoholism* [Step 1], *and the answer* [they] *had found* [Step 2]? (35: 3)
- Have I been *crazy* and *insane*?(see 5: 5; 37: 1; 38: 1, 2)
- Was I able *to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge*? (39: 1)

3.) The Jaywalker

- Are my thought-habits and behaviors *absurd and incomprehensible*? (37: 4)
- How have I *been strangely insane*? (38: 2)

4.) Fred

- Can I identify with Fred, who *would not believe himself an alcoholic* [Step 1], *much less accept a spiritual remedy for his problem* [Step 2]? (39: 2)
- Was I told *that if I had an alcoholic mind, the time and place would come – I would drink again*? (41: 2-42: 0)
- What are *the spiritual answer and the program of action*? (42: 2)
- What are my thoughts about the idea that *the alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink*? (43: 3)

III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 1 PRINCIPLES:

- Do I know that admitting powerlessness does not mean admitting worthlessness?
- How may I accept my new freedom in no longer having to lie about my drinking?
- How may I stay in touch with the reality of my disease, no matter how long I have been free from drinking?
- In what ways today have I begun to be honest in recovery?
- Can I tell my sponsor or someone else when I have been thinking about drinking or acting out on my disease in some other way?
- How am I practicing open-mindedness, humility, and willingness today?

* *

IV TAKE STEP 1 Take Step 1 in the second paragraph of BB page 30.

…We had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics. This is the first step in recovery. (30: 2)

This is how the Big Book authors described taking Step 1. If we concede, then according to the Big Book and under the conditions of this day, we take Step 1. As with all of the Steps, we each take Step 1 when we each say so.

Some write a statement such as this:
"I admit I am powerless over _____. My life is unmanageable."
_____(signature) _____(date)

The group may or may not choose to observe the completion of this Step by holding hands and reciting the Step.

SESSION 6

STEP 2 We Agnostics

Step 2 Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

***Willing to believe*…*cornerstone* [of a] *spiritual structure*. (47: 2)**

***Burn the idea into the consciousness of every man that he can get well regardless of anyone*. (98: 2)**

Step 2 written inventory
Take Step 2

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read Chapter 4, We Agnostics and Appendix II. Many will read Step 2 in the *12&12*.

- **WRITE** Write about your reflections on the chapter. Spirituality is taking the focus off of us, being more considerate of others, and awakening to a life already connected to a higher power. You may want to consider these questions:
  - Do I believe that I can be restored to wholeness?
  - How can I see a higher power working in my life?
  - What characteristics does my higher power NOT have?
  - What characteristics DOES my higher power have? This is sufficient to begin.

- **TALK** Call your sponsor and other group members to discuss your thoughts on the chapter.

- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION WITH MEDITATION / PRAYER**

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 2?

- What's the point of Step 2? *The point is* (60: 1) that we can get well, or more well. We can be restored to sanity, to wholeness. We can come to have faith in this hope, even when our disease says, "There is no hope for me, I might as well use."
- Step 2 reminds us that it is crazy to think we needed to be so much in control.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider pp. 44: 1,3; 45: 1,2,3; 47: 1; 52: 1,2,3; 567-8)

1.) Am I willing?

- Can I believe that other alcoholics have found peace of mind through this process?
- What is it, precisely and in detail, that I have worshipped? (54: 1)
- What, exactly, have I experienced? (55: 2-3)
- Am I willing to consider that I am not at the core of everything – good or bad – and hence there may be a power greater than any one of us?
- Was I insane or crazy to believe the lies the alcohol told me?

2.) My Problem

- What do these definitions of alcoholism mean to me?:
  - *when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely* [Mind]
  - *when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take.* [Body] (44: 1)
- If being *crazy* or *insanity* is a loss of *perspective* and *proportion* (5: 5; 37: 1), how is this like denial, dishonesty, or lack of humility? [*12&12* pp. 48: 0; 58: 1; 72: 2]
- In what areas of my life do I need sanity now?
- In what ways am I addicted to my painful and insane ways of thinking and reacting?

3.) My Solution

- How do I react when the authors tell me that *we must find a spiritual basis in life – or else*? (44: 3) In what ways am I spiritual?
- What does this mean to me: the Big Book's *main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem*? (45: 2)

4.) My Own Conception of a Higher Power

- What do the terms 'agnostic,' 'we came to believe' and 'restore us to sanity' mean to me? (See 55: 1-4, 57: 0)
- How does my childhood training about God affect my life and recovery today? (45: 3)
- What does it mean when the authors of the Big Book say, *When, therefore, we speak to you of God, we mean your own conception of God*? *This applies, too, to other spiritual expressions…. What* [do] *they mean to you*? (47: 1)
- What does <u>*work*</u> mean, as in, *Is not our age characterized by the ease with which we discard old ideas for new,…throw away the theory or gadget which does not <u>work</u> for something new which does*? (52: 1)
- What works and does not work in my life to give me serenity and peace of mind?
- For me, how is it that, *Our ideas did not <u>work</u>. But the God idea did*? (52: 3)

III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 2 PRINCIPLES

- How may I practice my new belief that I can get well or more well?
- How may I know that help is available, that I am not entirely alone?
- How may I stop relying on my own thinking and begin to ask for help today?
- How may I be *willing to grow along spiritual lines*? (60: 1)
- Have I sought help from my sponsor, gone to meetings, and reached out to other recovering alcoholics? What were the results?
- May I find a sign of a higher power in the support I receive from the fellowship?

* *

IV TAKE STEP 2 We take Step 2 in the second paragraph of BB page 47.

Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself? (47: 2) *...Willing to get well*. (97: 4-98: 0)

When we assent, then according to the Big Book and under the conditions of this day, we take Step 2. Keep in mind that our reasonable best is always more than good enough. Some groups mark taking Step 2 by holding hands and reciting the Step.

STEP 2 Written Inventory

Step 2 Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Consider these questions, which are borrowed from meetings and recovery literature. Add your own as appropriate. Consider responding in detail with specific examples, rather than rote yes's or no's.

Insanity
What is my understanding of my own sanity and insanity? [The Big Book authors define sanity as *sane and sound*. (69: 2) [healthy, whole] *Insanity* is *a lack of proportion, of the ability to think straight* (37: 1), and *crazy* is *an appalling lack of perspective*. (5: 5)]
-
-

What things have I repeatedly done that move me toward my own destruction?
-
-

How has my life been out of balance? Have I lacked perspective? How and when?
-
-

In what ways does my insanity say that things outside myself can make me whole or fix all my problems?
-
-

Came to believe
What does the phrase *came to believe,* mean to me? (59: 2) What do I believe in?
-
-

What are my negative thoughts, feelings, attitudes or beliefs that block my spirituality?
-
-

Can I believe that I can get well? Why? How, and in what ways?
-
-

Higher Power
What is a power greater than myself?
-
-

What are my grievances against a higher power?
-
-
What is the evidence that a higher power is working in my life?
-
-

What are the characteristics my higher power does NOT have?
-
-
-
-
-

What characteristics DOES my higher power have? [If you choose, you can use this understanding of higher power as a beginning for now.]
-
-
-
-
-

Restored to sanity [L. sanitas "sanity, health, being whole, sound or well"]
What type of sanity is Step 2 referring to?
-
-

Where in my life do I need sanity now?
-
-

How have I sought help from a higher power today?
-
-

Who do I know who is recovering well? What are they doing that is working?
-
-

Have I sought help from my sponsor, gone to meetings, and reached out to other recovering alcoholics? What were the results?
-
-

Have I used a meeting or the fellowship as a higher power? What happened?
-

SESSION 7

STEP 3 How it Works pp. 58 - 64

Step 3 Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God*, as we understood Him*.

***The keystone of the new and triumphant arch*. (62: 3) *A beginning.* (63: 3)**

Step 3 written inventory
Take Step 3

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read Chapter 5, How it Works, pp. 58- 64: 0. Many will also read Step 3 in the *12&12*.

- **WRITE** Write about your thoughts and reflections on this chapter and the focus questions.

- **TALK** Call your sponsor and other members of the group to discuss the reading and your reflections.

- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION WITH MEDITATION / PRAYER**

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 3?
-The first part of Chapter 5 is often read at meetings. What might it mean to each of us?
-Perhaps one or more members of the group can share their experiences with working Step 3 by the Big Book. We each may consider sharing our written reflections on Step 3.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider pp. 60: 3-63: 3)

1.) The Problem of Self

a.) ***Each person is like an actor who wants to run the whole show***. (60: 4)

- *Our actor is self-centered … Are not most of us concerned with our resentments, our self-pity, or ourselves?* (61: 2-62: 0)
- How am I like an actor? (60: 4) What roles, what masks, what characters do I play? Are these old worn out defenses? [See 73: 1; Optional *12&12*, 57: 1]
- Am I *almost always in collision with something or some body*? (60: 4)

b.) ***The show doesn't come off***. (61: 1)

- Where do I think that life does not treat me right? (61: 1)
- Where do my actions make the other players wish to retaliate and snatch all they can get out of the show? (61: 1)
- In my own life, am I familiar with the progression: anger => indignation => self-pity? (61: 1) Describe in detail.

- In what ways does the following describe me? *Is he not a victim of the delusion that he can wrest satisfaction and happiness out of this world if he only manages well?* (61: 1) [Is this the essence of Step 1?] -What do *delusion* (30: 2; 61: 1), *denial* (10: 1), and *manages* (61: 1) mean to me?

c.) ***So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making***. (62: 2)

- What does this mean? Didn't alcohol and other people cause all my troubles?
- How do my reactions to life events make me suffer? Be specific.
- *Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity, we step on the toes of our fellows and they retaliate*. (62: 1) Is this so? How?
- Where in the past have I made decisions based on self that later placed me in a position to be hurt? (62: 1) Be specific and give details. [See what self-instincts can be threatened, and that we react to, in the Step 4 *Affects My* column (65: 2)]

2.) The Solution: ***The God Idea*** (45: 3; 52: 3)

- *We alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness*. (62: 2)
- How has my playing God worked, or not worked, to give me and others serenity?
- *We had to quit playing God. It didn't work*. (62: 3)
- When did I stop playing God?

3.) The Program of Action

- Can I make a decision to turn my life and will over to a higher power of my understanding, just for today?
- In what ways am I taking action on Step 3 when I abstain from alcohol and work the remaining Steps?
- Step 3 Promises: Is it possible that I could enjoy *peace of mind, face life successfully*, and *lose* [my] *fear*? (63: 1) How?

III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 3 PRINCIPLES

- How does Step 3 allow me to build on the surrender I have developed in Step 1 and Step 2?
- Am I fighting anything in recovery? What do I think would happen if I became willing to let recovery prevail in that area of my life?
- How may I reaffirm my decision on a daily basis and continue to take the action of working the rest of the Steps?
- How may I decide to let go today, and surrender to being in unison with life?

*** ***

IV TAKE STEP 3 We take Step 3 in the second paragraph on BB page 63.

Have *we decided* that we are the *agents* of the higher power of our understanding? (62: 3) [See also 49: 1; 68: 3] Are we willing to decide to let go of our need to control, just for today?

According to the Big Book, and under the conditions of this day, we take Step 3.

Some groups acknowledge taking this Step by reciting the great Third Step Prayer (63: 2). Others will join hands and recite the Step. Feel free to do what is appropriate for you and the group.

STEP 3 Written Inventory

Step 3: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.

Consider these questions, which are borrowed from meetings and recovery literature, and ones of your own. Consider responding in detail with specific examples.

Decision

Who or what made my decisions for me while drinking?

-

-

Can I make a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of a higher power of my understanding – just for today? What fears or reservations do I have about turning my life over?

-

-

What actions will I take to follow through on my decision to turn my life over to a higher power?

-

-

Self-will To work Step 3 we need to identify the ways we have acted on self-will.

> [Will*ful*: (from ON wella- well of boiling heat) Headstrong, obstinate, rigid. Gaining power over people and situations.] [Will*ing*: Being receptive to new possibilities. Using our will in harmony with life, not against it.]

How have I been self-centered? How have I been defiant?

-

-

Which problems have I tried to resolve through willpower? What were the results?

-

-

In what ways are my troubles of my own making? (62: 2)

-

-

How do my reactions to life events make me suffer? Be specific.

-

-

In what ways am I an extreme example of *self-will run riot*? (62: 2) How have I acted on self-will?

-

-

How has my self-will affected others?

-

-

Have there been times in my recovery when I have found myself subtly taking back my will and my life? What alerted me? What have I done to recommit myself to the Third Step?
-
-

The God of My Understanding
Who or what makes my decisions for me in recovery?
-
-
Why is it okay to have a different higher power from everyone else?
-
-
How is my higher power working in my life today? How do my higher power and I communicate? What do I do in order to be open to my higher power?
-
-
Is my current concept of a higher power still working? How might I need to change my concept of a higher power?
-
-

Turning It Over
What are specific examples of how I turned my life and will over to my addictions?
-
-
How would my day look if I were to turn my will and my life over to the care of a higher power of my understanding?
-
-
What are my fears about making this decision?
-
-
Which thoughts and behaviors am I willing to turn over right now? Which am I holding on to?
-
-
How do I take action to turn my will and my life over to my higher power on a daily basis? Are there any practices I do regularly? What are they?
-
-
What have I done recently that demonstrates my surrender to recovery and to working a program?
-
-

II

PART II

SESSIONS 8 - 12
STEP 4
RELAXATION FOCUS – MEDITATIONS / PRAYERS

RESENTMENT:
We asked God [of our understanding] ***to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend. When a person offended we said to ourselves, "This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done*.**" **(67: 0)**

[Optional: ***If you have a resentment you want to be free of, if you will pray for the person or thing that you resent, you will be free. If you will ask in prayer for everything you want for yourself to be given to them, you will be free. Ask for their health, their prosperity, their happiness, and you will be free. Even when you don't really want it for them and your prayers are only words and you don't mean it, go ahead and do it anyway. Do it every day for two weeks, and you will find you have come to mean it and to want it for them, and you will realize that where you used to feel bitterness and resentment and hatred, you now feel compassionate understanding and love*. **(Freedom From Bondage, 552: 1)]**

FEAR:
We let Him [higher power of our understanding] ***demonstrate, through us, what He can do.***
We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be.
***At once, we commence to outgrow fear*. (68: 3)**

RELATIONSHIPS INCLUDING SEX:
We asked God [of our understanding] ***to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them. (69: 2)***
In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter. (69: 3)
***We let God be the final judge*. (70: 0)**

STEP 4 ASSETS AND LIABILITIES CHECKLIST
Also STEP 10 DAILY WRITTEN INVENTORY

We look at, "What qualities do I have that I like? That others like?" And we look at, "What qualities do I have that do not give me or others peace of mind?"

[Optional: Adapted from a June 1946, *A.A. Grapevine* article describing a **Character Assets and Character Liabilities Checklist**, such as Dr. Bob and many of the early AA's used to take newcomers through the Steps. See also He Sold Himself Short. (263: 0, 1, 2) Consider adding fear, selfishness, conceit, carelessness, intolerance, ill-temper, sarcasm, etc.]

A.A. Grapevine Volume 3 Issue 1 June 1946
"Daily Moral Inventory Mail Call for All A.A.s at Home Or Abroad
Enclosed you will find a little card … to make that moral inventory with regularity.
Mark W., Jackson, Mississippi

"My Daily Moral Inventory [Day____] **Month____ Year_____**
Check Results DAILY in Proper Column"

ASSETS* (Character Assets)	**LIABILITIES* (Character Defects)**
[***** Which traits work, and which do not work to give me serenity and peace of mind?]	
Strive for	**Watch for –**
-Self forgetfulness [self-forgetting]	**-Self pity**
-Humility	**-Self justification** [self-centered]
-Modesty	**-Self importance** [selfish]
-Self valuation	**-Self condemnation**
-Honesty	**-Dishonesty**
-Patience	**-Impatience**
-Love [courage]	**-Hate** [fear]
-Forgiveness [avoid retaliation]	**-Resentment** [anger]
-Simplicity	**-False Pride**
-Trust	**-Jealousy**
-Generosity	**-Envy**
-Activity	**-Laziness**
-Promptness	**-Procrastination**
-Straightforwardness	**-Insincerity**
-Positive thinking	**-Negative thinking**
-High-minded, spiritual, clean thinking	**-Vulgar, immoral, trashy thinking**
-Look for the good	**-Criticizing**
-Eliminate the negative	
-Accentuate the positive.	

CHECK THE SCORE EVERY NIGHT – TRY TO GET THE SLATE CLEAN

NOTES ON STEP 4

***When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically*. (64: 3)**

I ruthlessly faced my sins [blocks to Spirit]. (Bill's Story, 13: 2)
Heard in a meeting: "We need self-acceptance before we can have self improvement."

Problem / Solution / Program of Action

We have come a long way to reach Step 4. We now understand that our problem lies in being powerless over such recurring mental obsessions as the thought that we can drink again in safety, when taking that drink triggers our physical compulsion to drink to excess.

Our solution is to find a power greater than any one of us which can restore us to sanity, health, and wholeness. We come to believe that we can get well.

Our program of action is to turn our life and will over to such a power, of our own understanding, by the discipline of the daily practice of the principles of the Twelve Steps within the AA fellowship. The key to this action is our experience that *our troubles…are basically of our own making*. (62: 2) We have learned that our own reactions to hard times or good times have become self-centered thought-habits that frequently stand in the way of recovery. We learn that with help, we can change these for our own serenity.

Kit of spiritual tools The 1st-2nd-3rd-4th working of Step 4 lists

We have been promised a *kit of spiritual tools.* (25: 1) Step 4 delivers a *process* (64: 1), a *method* (114: 1) and a *treatment* (551: 1) that we can use often on our reactions to past events and present day troubles (Step 10), so we are less likely to pick up a drink and more likely to have peace of mind. While there is hard work ahead, we will be learning a lot about ourselves, and we do not have to dread it. Step 4 is not a test, we cannot fail it. The last thing we need is another chance to beat up on ourselves.

Inventory of Character Assets and Character Defenses

[An] *inventory...is an effort to discover the truth about the stock-in-trade*.(64: 1) We are in the business of staying sober, and the ways we think and behave are the stock

in trade. We are practicing understanding the exact nature of what we have done in our lives that has worked, and what has not worked, to give us peace of mind. We may address questions like these to better see our character assets:

- When have I done the right thing? What are my successes?
- What qualities do I like about myself? That others like?
- What are my values? Which ones am I committed to living by, and how?
- How have I shown concern for others, including myself?
- What spiritual principles am I practicing in my life?

[For Step 4 character assets see BB pages 67: 0, 1 and 70: 3. Also see the optional adapted 1946 *A.A. Grapevine* "Character Assets and Character Liabilities checklist" on page 40 of this workbook for a sample list of assets.]

Blocks to our spirit

The premise of Step 4 is that we have difficulty turning our life and will over because some of our thoughts and behaviors block us from experiencing our spirit – our higher power or our own better nature. We use the Step 4 process in order to identify these habitual blocking thoughts and behaviors in any resentment, fear, or hurtful action. Once we look deeper inside for the source of our old worn out defenses, or patterns, or defects, or shortcomings – which are usually involved in the roles we played in painful life events – then we can move on and change them in the Steps that follow. This enables us to clear a channel choked up with self-centered, dishonest or fearful motives and permits us to return to our search for our higher power's will, not our own, in any moment of stress. [Optional, see *12&12*, 103: 0]

What part of ourselves?

Through practice we learn to focus not so much on who it was that hurt or threatened us, or how they did that, but more on what part of ourselves was disturbed so that we drank, or acted as though we had been drinking. This often relates to feelings associated with our attitudes, personalities and behaviors in reaction to real or imagined threats to our security, our self esteem, or our sex / relationship instincts. We have little control over others and what they do, but we can change how we habitually react to life events. This is difficult for us. But, if we do not change we may drink. We have to ask for help. We find that help through the discipline of the practice of the Twelve Steps.

Where are we responsible?

We develop new skills in asking where we were responsible in the course of day to day happenings. The Big Book authors never accuse, criticize, or judge us. The purpose of this step is to help us become aware of ourselves as we were in the past and how we are today. We are invited to precisely describe our thinking and behavior. We name our part. We wrestle with spiritual inquiries such as, "Where were my *motives* self-centered or dishonest or at fault?" (See 86: 2) We must honestly ask what these terms mean to us in our own experience and in our own words. (See 47: 1; 63: 3) We set down a true picture in accurate proportion and real perspective of how we were involved.

We may have been ***selfish*** intentionally, or because we did not even think of the concerns of others. Certainly we have often lied or not been genuine on purpose, but we are also ***dishonest*** when we see things only in our own distorted way, and not as they really are. Our ***self-seeking*** and ***inconsiderate*** behaviors relate to where we tried to control or manipulate others, thinking that we were better than or inferior to them. ***Fear*** is our number one character defect, underneath all the others. Our behaviors are driven by ancient fears for our very existence, of losing our security, of not getting our desires, and of being shown up for what we are trying to hide. These culminate in our ***faults***: our instincts and emotions in collision, or deep seismic gaps between what we instinctively want for ourselves and what we wish for others. (67: 2, 3; 69: 1)

In Step 4, we practice giving accurate descriptions of what has blocked us from our spirit. We state where we missed the mark when we could have been on target, and where we were out of bounds in this game of life. Why do we behave in these ways? Because we are alcoholic. (See 60: 2; 338)

Turnarounds

In focused meditation and prayer, we recognize that others like ourselves are sick and suffering. We ask our higher power to help us wish for others and for ourselves that we all may have deep happiness, genuine serenity, and peace of mind. This helps return us to being right size, and gives us a new perspective as we join in with life. We find that we put our trust in this new faith, not by way of emotion or wishing, but by our own experience through our own practice.

Step 4 Directions: "Who-How-What" & "Why, When, Where and Willing."

The directions for Step 4 are in the Big Book, yet surprisingly few alcoholics in recovery comprehend them, and fewer still practice them. Our goal is to do both. Our method is to follow the instructions as written and see what the results are.

The reading describes what an inventory is. (64: 1) Then the Big Book authors look at *the things in ourselves which had been blocking us* (64: 0) from our higher power, which turns out to be *self, manifested in various ways*. (64: 2) This chapter specifically mentions the blocks to our spirit of our ***resentments*** (64: 3), our ***fears*** (64: 3), and the consequences of *our own conduct* (69: 1) in the area of *our personal relationships (including **sex**).* (64: 3 - 65: 0) For every one of these three manifestations of self (anger, fear, sex) the book has us analyze our life experiences in each of these four ways:

1ST *We set them on paper*. (64: 3) **Who-How-What** We learn that our troubles are not so much **who** hurt us or **how** they did that, but rather may stem from our own reaction to **what** part of ourselves is being threatened.

2ND *We considered it carefully*. (65: 3) **Why? Why** work to change? We learn that we have to wrestle with these issues or we may drink again and die.

3RD *We turned back to the list*. (66: 3) **When? When** ready to change we learn to avoid retaliation, and instead see others as being as sick and as worthy as ourselves.

4TH *Referring to our list again*. (67: 2) **Where & Willing?** By examining our *defects* and *shortcomings* (50: 1), our *motives* (86: 2) and *the exact nature of our wrongs* (59: 2), we learn **where** we may be *selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, and frightened* (67: 2), we thereby become ***willing*** *to set these matters straight*. (67: 2)

An annotated selection from the Big Book Step 4 follows on pages 45 – 48 of this SbBB workbook which highlights these four workings of *our grudge list* (65: 1).

[Optional: *Once this healthy practice has become grooved, it will be so interesting and profitable that the time it takes won't be missed*. (*12&12*, 89: 2)]

~ Sessions 8 – 11, SbBB pages 54-76, thoroughly look into what the Big Book says regarding resentments, fears, and relationships including sex. Optional written inventory forms are provided.

~ "Other Options" on SbBB page 50 points out that some may choose to skip the intervening Sessions and go directly to Session 12 on SbBB page 77 for one group member's condensed summary of the Big Book Step 4 process.

STEP 4 BIG BOOK *ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS*

Chapter 5, pp 63: 4 – 67: 2 **– Annotated to show four workings of list**

69: 3 "*In other words, we treat* *[resentment, fear or]* *sex*[/relationship conduct] *as we would any other prob*lem." [ie: MAKE A **LIST**, etc.]

[THE FOUR WORKINGS OF OUR GRUDGE LIST: 1st–2nd–3rd–4th

1st Who-How-What; 2nd Why; 3rd When; 4th Where & Willing

1st Who (resentful at?);
How (hurt us?);
What (part of self affected?)

2nd Why (do this work?)

3rd When (ready to change, what do we do?) {Turnaround}

4th Where (were we at fault?)
& Willing (to change?)]

…….From the Big Book:…….

63:4 "Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, 64:0 which many of us had never attempted. Though our decision was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us. Our liquor was but a symptom. So we had to get down to causes and conditions.

64:1 "Therefore, we started upon a personal inventory. This was Step Four. A business which takes no regular inventory usually goes broke. Taking a commercial inventory is a fact-finding and a fact-facing process. It is an effort to discover the truth about the stock-in-trade. One object is to disclose damaged or unsalable goods, to get rid of them promptly and without regret. If the owner of the business is to be successful, he cannot fool himself about values.

64:2 "We did exactly the same thing with our lives. We took stock honestly. First, we searched out the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure. Being convinced that self, manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us, we considered its common manifestations.

64:3 "***Resentment*** is the 'number one' offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have been spiritually sick. When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically.

[1st Who-How-What?]

[1st] "In dealing with resentments, **we set them ON PAPER**. **[LIST]**

[WHO]

"We **LIST**ed people, institutions or principles with ***whom*** we were angry.

[HOW did they hurt us]

"We asked ourselves ***why we were angry***.

[WHAT part of ourselves was hurt]

"In most cases it was found that ***our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions, our personal relationships*** 65:0 ***(including sex)*** were hurt or threatened. So we were sore. We were 'burned up.'

[REPEAT:]

[WHO]

65:1 "On our grudge list we set opposite each ***name***

[HOW]

"our ***injuries***.

[WHAT]

"Was it our ***self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal, or sex relations***, which had been interfered with?

65:2 "We were usually as definite as this example:

"I'm resentful at:	The Cause:	Affects my:
[WHO?	**HOW did they hurt me?**	**WHAT instincts affected?]**
"Mr. Brown	His attention to my wife	Sex relat; Self-esteem (fear)
	Told my wife of my mistress	Sex relat; Self-esteem (fear)
	Brown may get my job	Security; Self-esteem (fear)

"Mrs. Jones	She's a nut	Pers relat. Self-esteem (fear)
	She snubbed me	
	Committed her husband for drinking	
	he's my friend	
	She's a gossip	
"My employer	Unreasonable, unjust	Self-esteem (fear)
	overbearing	Security
	Threatens to fire me for	
	drinking etc.	
"My wife	Misunderstands & nags	Pride
	Likes Brown	Sex relations
	Wants house in her name	Security (fear)

……..

65:3 "We went back through our lives. Nothing counted but thoroughness and honesty. When we were finished =>

[2nd **WHY should we look at this?**]

[2nd] "**we considered IT [LIST] carefully**. The first thing apparent
66:0 was that this world and its people were often quite wrong. To conclude that others were wrong was as far as most of us ever got. The usual outcome was that people continued to wrong us and we stayed sore. Sometimes it was remorse and then we were sore at ourselves. But the more we fought and tried to have our own way, the worse matters got. As in war, the victor only seemed to win. Our moments of triumph were short-lived.

66:1 "It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness. To the precise extent that we permit these, do we squander the hours that might have been worth while. But with the alcoholic, whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of resentment is infinitely grave. ***We found that it is fatal***. For when harboring such feelings we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit. The insanity of alcohol returns and we drink again. And with us, ***to drink is to die***.

66:2 "If we were to live, we had to be free of ***anger***. The grouch and the brainstorm were not for us. They may be the dubious luxury of normal men, but for alcoholics these things are poison.

[3rd WHEN we were ready… {Turnaround}]

[3rd] 66:3 "**We turned back to the LIST**, for it held the key to the future. We were prepared to look at it from an entirely different angle. We began to see that **[WHO]** the ***world and its people*** really dominated us. In that state, the **[HOW]** ***wrong-doing of others***, fancied or real, **[WHAT]** had ***power to actually kill***. How could we escape? We saw that these resentments must be mastered, but how? We could not wish them away any more than alcohol.

[REPEAT:]

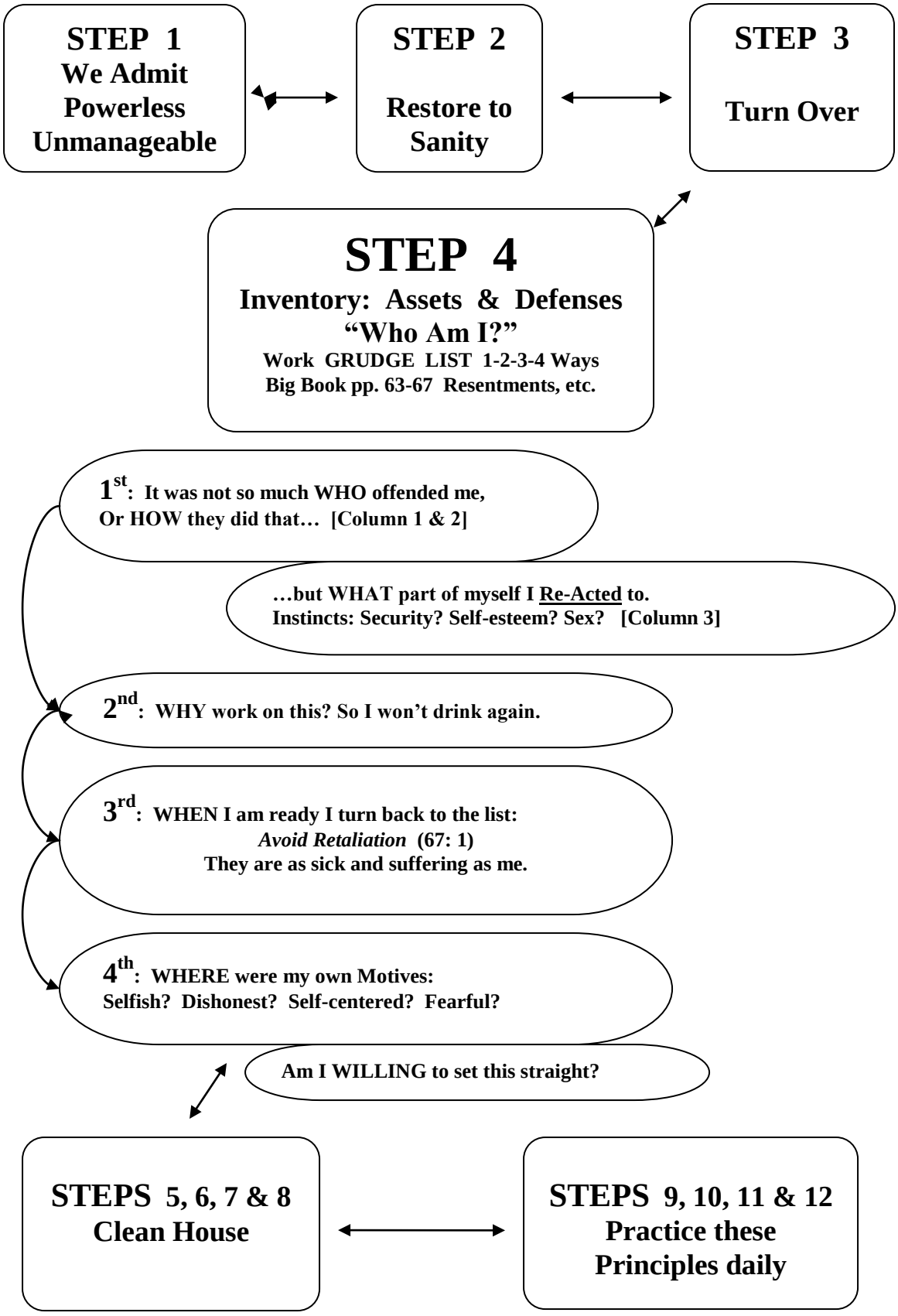
66:4 "This was our course: We realized that **[WHO]** the ***people who wronged us*** were perhaps spiritually sick.

67:0 "Though we did not like **[HOW]** ***their symptoms*** and **[WHAT]** the ***way these disturbed us***, they, like ourselves, were sick too. We asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend. **[WHEN]** ***When*** a person offended we said to ourselves, '***This is a sick man***. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done.'

67:1 "***We avoid retaliation*** or argument. We wouldn't treat sick people that way. If we do, we destroy our chance of being helpful. We cannot be helpful to all people, but at least God will show us how to take a kindly and tolerant view of each and every one.

[4th WHERE at fault? & WILLING to set things straight.]

[4th] 67:2 "**Referring to our LIST again**. Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. **[WHERE]** ***Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened***? **[See *motives* 86: 2]** Though a situation had not been entirely our fault, we tried to disregard the other person involved entirely. Where were we to blame? The inventory was ours, not the other man's. When we saw our faults we **LIST**ed them. We placed them before us ***in black and white*** **[LIST]**. We admitted our wrongs honestly and were **[WILLING]** ***willing to set these matters straight***."


STEP 1
We Admit
Powerless
Unmanageable
STEP 2
Restore to
Sanity
STEP 3
Turn Over
STEP 4
Inventory: Assets & Defenses
"Who Am I?"
Work GRUDGE LIST 1-2-3-4 Ways
Big Book pp. 63-67 Resentments, etc.
1st: It was not so much WHO offended me,
Or HOW they did that… [Column 1 & 2]
…but WHAT part of myself I Re-Acted to.
Instincts: Security? Self-esteem? Sex? [Column 3]
2nd: WHY work on this? So I won't drink again.
3rd: WHEN I am ready I turn back to the list:
Avoid Retaliation (67: 1)
They are as sick and suffering as me.
4th: WHERE were my own Motives:
Selfish? Dishonest? Self-centered? Fearful?
Am I WILLING to set this straight?
STEPS 5, 6, 7 & 8
Clean House
STEPS 9, 10, 11 & 12
Practice these
Principles daily

Other Options

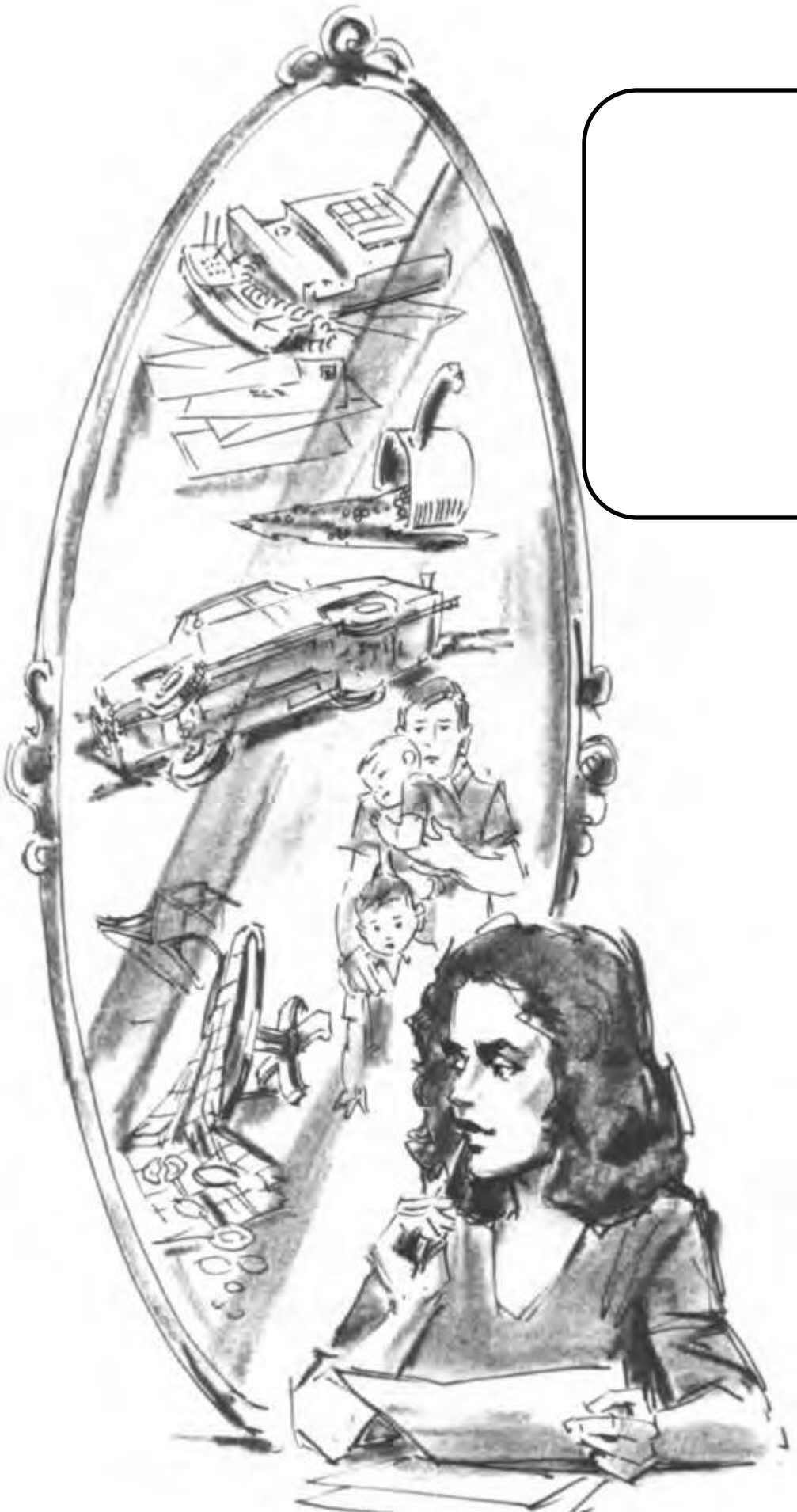
Before launching into Sessions 8, 9, 10 and 11, you may wish to pause and reflect a moment. Perhaps you are "restless, irritable, and discontented" (xxviii: 4) about this whole Step 4 process and it may be good to let that go. Relax. Take some deep breaths. Allow yourself to be present in your body for a while.

Remember that there are as many ways to list one's own character assets and character defenses by taking Step 4 as there are people in recovery. The following story is one condensed example from a time before the Big Book was written down:

> "...It was Dr. Bob's afternoon off - he had me to the office and we spent three or four hours formally going through the ... program as it was at that time. ... Dr. Bob led me through all of these steps. At the moral inventory [now Step 4], he brought up several of my bad personality traits or character defects such as selfishness, conceit, jealousy, carelessness, intolerance, ill-temper, sarcasm, and resentments. We went over these at great length, and then he finally asked me if I wanted these defects of character removed. When I said yes, we both knelt at his desk and prayed, each of us asking to have these defects taken away.
>
> "This picture is still vivid. If I live to be a hundred, it will always stand out in my mind. It was very impressive, and I wish that every A.A. could have the benefit of this type of sponsorship today." (BB, "He Sold Himself Short", 263: 0, 1, 2)

That was one way to do it. Now, in these Steps by the Big Book sessions, we are looking at the method presented on pages 64 to 71 of *Alcoholics Anonymous*. It is not THE way to do the Step 4 inventory, but it is A way. There has been a lot of confusion about the process of taking this inventory by the Big Book, but it is actually quite simple. The instructions are condensed, and it is often difficult to understand and follow. In Sessions 8 – 11 of this workbook we will be looking at them in great detail. Give it a try with the group, your buddy and/or your sponsor.

However, at this point some groups elect to spend a session on the Big Book directions and then skip Sessions 8 – 11. They go right to Session 12 on page 77 of this SbBB workbook, the "Grudge List - One Group Member's Pocket Treatment," and that is fine too. The point is to get to work on writing your own inventory. Easy does it, but do it!



Step 4 Notes

ANGER

SESSION 8 RESENTMENT (Part A) INVENTORY

STEP 4 How It Works Resentment (Part A) Grudge List

Step 4: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

The 1ST and 2ND working of the grudge list: Who-How-What & Why

***If we were to live, we had to be free of anger*. (66: 2)**
[*Step Four is but the beginning of a lifetime practice*. (*12&12*, 50: 2)]

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY- What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read Chapter 5, How It Works. (8 paragraphs, pp. 64-66) Many will read Step 4 in the *12&12* as well, where there is no mention of a written inventory beyond an assets/liabilities checklist. Watch for paralysis from fear/perfectionism.
    - We come here with a huge load of stored up shame, guilt, and unresolved pain to be let go of. Step 4 helps us lay bare the conflicts of the past so that we are no longer at their mercy.
    - Step 4 gives us the means to find out who we are, and what we are not. It is about finding our assets as well as our defects of character. We discover that our problems began long before we took our first drink. We may have felt isolated and afraid, and it was our desire to change the way we felt that led to our drinking.
    - We have a disease. We are not responsible for being an alcoholic, any more than a diabetic is responsible for being diabetic. But now that we know we are an alcoholic, we are responsible for our recovery. There are no longer excuses, because we realize we must live the principles of the Steps daily or we will die spiritually, emotionally and physically.
    - We are working on practices – things we do – that we will use every day of our lives to move us from being restless, irritable and discontented toward keeping us sober and having serenity and peace of mind.

- **WRITE** Do Step 4 as best you reasonably can, and that is more than good enough.

Start writing your grudge lists, one list at a time. Who-How-What. Put down all the people, places, and things **who** you resent on a list. Then list a few notes about **how** you *were hurt or threatened* (65: 0), or where you had expectations of others, or others had expectations of you – where you were *sore* or were *'burned up.'* (65: 0). And then list **what** part of your self was affected.

[Resentment: (L -to re-feel.) Indignantly to feel old injuries over and over again.] [Anger: (ON -grief.) To rage.] [Grudge: (OF -to murmur.) Ill-will.]

- **TALK** Meet with your sponsor and other members of the group. If there were abuse issues, the task is to not deny them, and to seek outside counseling help.

- **PRACTICE DAILY MEDITATION / PRAYER** Call on a higher power.

ANGER

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE- What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 4?

Share about experiences with resentments and how working the Steps worked on them.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider pp. 64: 0-66: 2) Try reading these out loud. List assets and liabilities as to which behaviors and thought-habits work, and which do not work, to give serenity and peace of mind in life. See page 40 this workbook.

A. The 1ST Working of the Grudge List: Who-How-What

Begin with relaxation / centering silence. Ask for help. *In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper*. (64: 3)

- List all the people, institutions, or principles you resent. Tip: Carry a list with you and write down details about every time you are restless, irritated, and discontent, every time you are annoyed, angry, or have expectations, etc.

- Try the *example* of the *Mr. Brown* multi-column chart on BB page 65.

Grudge List from *this example* (65: 2)

I'm resentful at: **Who? (People, Places, Things, Institutions, Principles, etc.)**	*The Cause:* **How? How they hurt or threatened me.**	*Affects my:* **What? What part of self affected that I reacted to.**

- Fill in only the first column for now.
- Make the chart as large or as small as you see fit.

1.) Who? The First Column: "Who *hurt or threatened* me?" (65: 0) *I'm resentful at…* (65: 2)

- In the first column, the *grudge list* (65: 1), *we listed* [names of] *people, institutions, or principles with whom we were angry*. (64: 3)
- List 100 or 300 or 1000 names of people (parents, spouse, co-workers, the people in traffic or the checkout line, etc.), institutions (jail, IRS, etc.), or principles ('You reap what you sow.' 'Our troubles are of our own making,' etc., etc.) about which you have resentments.

Grudge List

Who? (People, Places, Things, Institutions, Principles, etc.)
…example… (65: 2)
Mr. Brown
Mrs. Jones
My employer
My wife

2.) How? The Second Column: "How did they hurt or threaten me?" (65: 2) After you have made the list of all the people, institutions, and principles that you resent, one at a time you are ready to begin to fill in the second column. You might consider selecting a few representative "grudges" to work on now, reserving the option to eventually work through all of them in due time.

- *We asked ourselves why we were angry*. (64: 3)
- *We set opposite each name our injuries*. (65: 1)

Grudge List

Who? (People, Places, Things, Institutions, Principles, etc.)	**How? How they hurt or threatened me.**
…example… (65: 2) *Mr. Brown*	*His attention to my wife.* *Told my wife of my mistress.* *Brown may get my job.*

Now that you have made a list of everything the people, places, institutions, principles, etc. on your list did to cause your resentment, you are ready to proceed to the Third Column. You list what part of yourself was affected by the actions of the person, place, institution, or principle that you resent.

3.) What? The Third Column: "What part of my Self did they hurt or threaten?" *In most cases it was found that our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions, our personal relationships (including sex) were hurt or threatened*. (64: 3-65: 0)

- *Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal, or sex relations, which had been interfered with?* (65: 1)
- Opposite each selected name, and every *cause* (65: 2) listed, one at a time succinctly write down in the third column what part of your self, or your instincts, or your actor's role, was affected. [See: *Each person is like an actor*…. (60: 4)]
- [Heard in a meeting: "We list the three 'S's' of the instinct of Self:
  - Security instinct – material and emotional;
  - Society/Self-esteem instinct – fear for our very existence;
  - Sex instinct – relationship, companionship." (also see *12&12*, p 49: 0)]
- Our resentments are part of our reaction to these perceived threats.

Grudge List

Who? (People, Places, Things, Institutions, Principles, etc.)	**How? How they hurt or threatened me.**	**What? What part of self affected that I reacted to.**
…example… (65: 2) *Mr. Brown*	*Brown may get my job.*	*Security* *Self-esteem (fear)*

B. The 2ND Working of the Grudge List: Why? "Why must I change?"

When we were finished we considered it [list] *carefully*. (65: 3) Begin with silence.

1.) Resentments build us up to a drink.

- *To conclude that others were wrong was as far as most of us ever got*.(66: 0)
- *Sometimes it was remorse and then we were sore at ourselves*. (66: 0) [ie: self pity. See *He becomes angry, indignant, self-pitying.* (61: 1)]
- *It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness*. (66: 1)
- *To the …extent that we permit these* [resentments],*…we squander the hours*.(66: 1) *But with the alcoholic, whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of resentment is infinitely grave*. (66: 1)
- *For when harboring such feelings we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit*. (66: 1)

2.) If we drink, we die.

- *We found that it is fatal*. (66: 1)
- *The insanity of alcohol returns and we drink again*. (66: 1)
- *And with us, to drink is to die*. (66: 1)

3.) To live and be free of anger.

- *If we were to live, we had to be free of anger*. (66: 2)
- *For alcoholics these things are poison*. (66: 2)

C. What might we learn from the 1ST and 2ND working of the list?

1ST …*Set them on paper*. (64: 3) Who-How-What?

- We learned from the First Column of our grudge list that our anger and resentment at **who** hurt us (or did not meet our expectations) really does hold our mind hostage and controls us, and blocks us from the spirit of our understanding.
- We learned from the Second Column that it is not who the people, institutions, or principles are that make us angry and resentful; it is **how** they hurt or threatened us. It is not so much who they are but how they ACT. Just like us, they may be good people who do foolish things. We may begin forgiving ourselves for our own actions and behaviors, and others for their actions, right here.
- We learned from the Third Column that it is not who or even how they hurt us, but the way we have habitually chosen to REACT to **what** they threaten in us which determines whether we are upset or not. **We react by habit**.

2ND …*Considered it carefully*. (65: 3) Why?

- "Why must I change?" Our present mental resentment habits lead to self pity, are a waste of time and, if we do not change, we may drink and die. Our own thought-habits lead us to drink.
- Now we know why we must change. We go to the 3RD and 4TH working of the grudge list in Session 9, **when** we are ready, to see **where** we were responsible.

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SESSION 9 RESENTMENT (Part B) INVENTORY

STEP 4 How It Works Resentment (Part B) 'Turnarounds'

The 3RD and 4TH working of the grudge list: When? & Where?

***They, like ourselves, were sick too*. (67:0)**

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read of Step 4 Resentments in the Big Book (the final 4 paragraphs, pp. 66-67)
  - **Turn Back** In Session 9 we *turn…back* (see 66: 3) to the list and do the 3RD and 4TH workings of our resentment inventory.
  - **Turnarounds** 'Turnarounds' is a term used by some in AA to indicate the beneficial *huge emotional displacements and rearrangements* (27: 4) that happen to us as we work through the Big Book Step 4 process. Our Step 4 turnaround is returning us to our proper orientation, back from our isolation.
  - We are given tools to do this through a close and inquiring reading of Step 4 in the Big Book.

- **WRITE** Write about one or more resentments or about your reflections on the readings. Heard in a meeting: "An expectation is a resentment waiting to happen."

- **TALK** Call your sponsor and other members of the group.

- **PRACTICE DAILY MEDITATION / PRAYER** Ask for help.

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of my resentment inventory?

Continue your discussions with the group about your resentments and how you are working the Steps in order to address them.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider pp. 66: 3-67: 2) Cross off the bulleted points.

A. The 3RD Working of the Grudge List: When? "When I am ready, what do I do?" *Turned back to the list* (66: 3) Begin with centering silence.

1.) A Different Angle – Lessons of the Three Columns

- *We turned back to the list, for it held the key to the future*. (66: 3)
- *We were prepared to look at it from an entirely different angle.* (66: 3)
- *We began to see that the world and its people really dominated us.* (66: 3) [First Column lesson- "There is no room in my head for contact with my higher power."]

- *In that state, the wrong-doing of others, fancied or real*… [Second Column lesson- "It was not who, but how they hurt me that I'm mad at."]
- *had power to actually kill*. (66: 3) [Third Column lesson- "I react and drink."]

2.) How Could We Escape? (66: 3) Empathy – They are like us.

- *This was our course: We realized that the people who wronged us* [First Column names -**who** hurt us] *were perhaps spiritually sick.* (66: 4)
- *Though we did not like their symptoms*…[Second Column –**how** they hurt us]
- …*and the way these disturbed us*,… [Third Column –**what** part of self we reacted to]
- *they, like ourselves, were sick too*. (67:0)

3.) Meditation / Prayer * (see C – 3, below) Avoid retaliation.

- *We asked God* [of our understanding] *to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend.* (67: 0)
- *We avoid retaliation or argument.* (67: 1)

B. The 4TH Working of the Grudge List: Where? "Where am I responsible?" "Can I describe my part?"

Referring to our list again. (67: 2) Meditation / prayer to ask for help.

1.) Our Own Mistakes

Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. (67: 2) [Mistake: A wrong action. Error; not right; blunder; out of bounds; missing the mark; defect; shortcoming.]

2.) Our Motives – More writing in more columns.

- *Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened?* (67: 2)
    - These *motives* (86: 2) were the terms used by early AA's as mirror-images of the "Four Absolutes" of the Oxford Group: "Absolute Selflessness," "Absolute Honesty," "Absolute Purity," and "Absolute Love."
    - In contrast, since the Big Book authors were afraid of getting drunk trying for perfection, and to be absolutely too good too soon, they tried rather to be less selfish, less dishonest, less self-seeking, and less fearful. Consequently they found they were less likely to take a drink and less likely to live on an emotional dry bender.
- Opposite each Third Column instinct or role that was threatened and that you reacted to, write down and share precisely and in detail what your motives were.
- Try to keep your written responses concise with specific examples. Avoid generalities. Expand upon "I lied," or "I was dishonest," by telling what happened; for example: "I promised to be there and never showed up."

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Motives defined: What do these terms mean to you? (see 47: 1)

a.) Selfishness Concern for self regardless of others.

- Selfishness: ego = me. Self-absorption: "It's all about me!" Regard for our own interest or happiness to the disregard of the well-being of others. Not aware of others and their needs. Instinctively putting our own needs first. A false sense of a separate self, etc.
    - Habitual selfishness: We could not see others' or our real place in the universe. [Optional: *Our total inability to form a true partnership with another human being. 12&12*, 53: 1]
    - 'Turnaround': We begin to see that we can change to our true nature – so that ultimately the best care of ourselves lies in our unselfish regard for the concern of the whole, that care for others includes us as well. Care of our selves becomes care of our soul, and is known to be care of all.

b.) Dishonesty A tendency to deceit, to conceal our true character.

- Dishonest: Fraudulent, not what purported. The reverse of honesty; lack of probity or integrity; disposition to deceive, defraud, or steal; thievishness; theft, fraud. Not corresponding to fact. Trying to be people pleasers in order to gain approval from other people. Believing the lies our mind tells us, etc.
    - Habitual dishonesty: We lost perspective. We often did not even know we were lying because we had a false way of seeing reality. D-E-N-I-A-L
    - 'Turnaround': We begin to see that we can change to our true nature – to be who we truly are, free from concealment, to be a sincere person acting in direct, frank, open ways. We are good and caring people.

c.) Self-seeking, inconsiderate Concern for self over (or under) others.

- Self-seeking: The seeking after our own welfare before that of others, prosecution of selfish ends. To put ourselves either above or below others. Seeing ourselves as better or worse than others. Lacking perspective, etc
    - Inconsiderate: Thoughtless, negligent, rash, incautious, heedless.
    - Habitual self-seeking: As a matter of course we tended to put our needs first, including our needs to be first, to be last, to be liked, to be feared, and to be pitied. [*Top of the heap, or to hide underneath it. 12&12*, 53: 1]
    - 'Turnaround': We begin to see that we can change from self-seeking to our true nature – to be thoughtful and considerate and in partnership with others and to act with loving compassion toward ourselves and others.

d.) Fear Dread. *Self-reliance failed us*. (68: 1)

- Fear: To feel alarmed or uneasy. The emotion of pain or uneasiness caused by the sense of impending danger. Apprehension of some future evil. [*Fear that we would lose something we already possessed or would fail to get something we wanted. 12&12*, 76: 2], or be found out for who we are. To lose heart, etc.
    - Habitual fear: Always anticipating ambush. Our apprehension of impending danger, our anxiety, was the existential basis for our selfishness, our dishonesty and self-seeking, and our drinking.

- ‘Turnaround’: We begin to see that we can change to our true nature – to be free of alarm and apprehension, free of being restless, irritable and discontented, and to embrace a feeling of goodwill toward all creation, including us. We can act with loving compassion for others and ourselves.
- [Heard in a meeting: “Fear is to lose heart. Courage is to take heart. Love is to open one's heart. Trust is to rely on heart. Faith is trust in heart.”]

3.) Our Faults Where were we <u>out of bounds</u> in this game of life?

a.) The Inventory is ours.

- *Though a situation had not been entirely our fault*
- *we tried to disregard the other person involved entirely*. (67: 2)
- *Where were we to blame*? (67: 2) Did we step on their toes? (See 62: 1) [Blame: Responsibility for fault or error, or being not right. Blundering; out of bounds; missing the mark; defects, shortcomings.]
- Our reactions out of bounds? *The inventory was ours, not the other man's*. (67: 2)

b.) List our faults. [See *motives* 86: 2]

- *When we saw our faults, we listed them*. (67: 2) [Fault: A seismic gap; a conflict between deeply held values; or instincts in collision, ie: We want to help others, but also we want our own way. Out of bounds; missing the mark; shortcomings.]
- *We placed them before us in black and white*. (67: 2) Write them down.
- Disregarding everyone and everything else involved, look at each angry reaction situation and see what, if anything, we did to cause each event, or to make it worse, or to <u>react</u> to it and hence create more troubles for ourselves or others.
- *We admitted our wrongs honestly* (67: 2) [Wrong: Twisted way of thinking and acting. Error; not right; blunder; out of bounds; missing the mark; shortcomings.]

C. Our Turnarounds by four workings of the Grudge List. <u>Willing</u>?

“Am I willing to set it straight?”

1.) Willing. *And were <u>willing to set these matters straight</u>*. (67: 2) [Straight: Not crooked. Honest; by the rules; right; in bounds. Selfless, honest, loving, pure motives.]

2.) Turnarounds In order to save our own lives, we are turning from our habitual point of view. *We stood at the turning point*. (59: 1) *Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them.* (27:4) We become willing to do things differently. We are willing to change. We turn around.

3.) * (A-3) Relax / Meditate / Pray We meditate / pray for the benefit of all. Many in AA use such a composite prayer on behalf of others and for themselves. [Optional: God of my understanding, bless _____ (including myself), for she/he is a sick person, and but by your grace, there go I. I pray for their health, happiness and prosperity. I pray I may show them the patience, kindliness and love I would want to be shown or that I would show a sick friend. God save me from being hurt, threatened, insulted, or angry. How may I help them? May thy will, not mine, be done. (See 67: 0; 552: 1)]

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STEP 4 Resentment *Grudge List* (65: 1) Inventory Forms

Make multiple copies or expand these templates into your own notebook.
<u>Who</u>? "Who hurt or threatened me?" *I'm resentful at…* (65: 2)
Work down the list from top to bottom, just writing the names at this time. Ignore the Second and Third columns for now. Use multiple pages.

……

Person **Institution** **Principle I resent**	**18.** **19.**
1.	**20.**
2.	**21.**
3.	**22.**
4.	**23.**
5.	**24.**
6.	**25.**
7.	**26.**
8.	**27.**
9.	**28.**
10.	**29.**
11.	**30.**
12.	**31.**
13.	**32.**
14.	**33.**
15.	**34.**
16.	**35.**
17.	**36.** **Etc., etc.**

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Step 4- Resentment- Fill in Second and Third Columns
Make multiple copies or expand these templates into your own notebook.
1. <u>Who</u>? First Column name: *I'm Resentful At…* (65: 2)
"Who hurt or threatened or interfered with me?" Inventory one name at a time.
2. <u>How</u>? Second Column: *The Cause*… (65: 2)
"How did they hurt or threaten or interfere with me?"
Opposite each selected name we write down in four or five words how they hurt us that caused our anger and resentment. We write just in this second column for now.
3. <u>What</u>? Third Column: *Affects My…* (65: 2)
"What instincts or parts of my Self did they hurt or threaten and that I reacted to?"
Opposite each selected name, and every *cause* listed, we succinctly write down in the third column what part of self (security, society/self-esteem, sex or relationships, etc.), or instinct (64: 3-65: 1), or actor's role or character (60: 4) was hurt or threatened or in play. Our resentments are part of our reaction to this perceived threat.

1. First Column: ***I'm resentful at:*** **Who? Who resent?**	**2. Second Column:** ***The cause:*** **How? The cause?**	**3. Third Column:** ***Affects my:*** **What? Part of self?**

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STEP 4 Resentment Turnarounds

For every item in the Third Column we ask, "<u>Where</u> am I responsible?"
Make multiple copies or expand in your notebook.

For every Third Column situation or event, and reaction, fill in resentment 'turnarounds.' "Where am I responsible?" We write down and share precisely and in detail what our motives were. [See *motives* 86: 2]

- *Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done,* [Second Column] *we resolutely looked for our own mistakes.* (67: 2)
- *Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened?* (67: 2)

…….

Where was I selfish? (67: 2) [Concern for self regardless of others. Self-absorbed.]
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Where was I dishonest? (67: 2) [A tendency to deceit, conceal our true character, lack perspective. We believed our own lies.]
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Where was I self-seeking (67: 2) or inconsiderate? (69: 1) [Concern for self over – or under – others.]
-
-
-
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-
-

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Where was I frightened? (67: 2) [Habitual anxiety: Afraid of losing something we have, not getting something we want, or of being found out for who we are.]
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

…….

Write our faults. *The inventory was ours, not the other man's.* (67: 2) *When we saw our faults we listed them. We placed them* [faults] *before us in black and white*. (67: 2)

Where was I at fault? (67: 2) [A seismic gap between our own and others' deeply held values or our own instincts in collision. Out of bounds? Miss the mark?]
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
(Why do we act this way? Because….see p. 338)
…….
<u>Willing</u> to set matters straight. *Were willing to set these matters straight*. (67: 2)

Step 4 Resentment Turnaround Meditation / Prayer.

[Optional: God bless _____(including myself), for they are a sick person, and but by your grace, there go I. I pray for their health, happiness, and prosperity. I pray I may show them the patience, tolerance, kindliness and love I would want to be shown or that I would show a sick friend. God save me from being hurt, threatened, insulted or angry. How may I help them? May thy will, not mine be done. (See 67: 0; 552: 1)]

FEAR

SESSION 10 FEAR INVENTORY
STEP 4 How It Works *Our fears*. (68: 1)
***But did not we, ourselves, set the ball rolling*? (67: 3)**

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY- What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read Chapter 5, How It Works, on the fear inventory. (67-68)
  - We want to get rid of the fear and resentment that control our thinking so a power greater than any one of us can direct our thinking instead.
  - Our fears come from our early childhood *ideas, emotions, and attitudes* (27: 4) that we developed in reaction to ancient *fancied or real* (66: 3) threats to our basic instincts of life. Without awareness, our old thoughts and fears may become today's actions.
  - [Fear: (OE- sudden danger.) Dread, expectation of harm, or ambush; dismay, panic.]
  - Heard in a meeting: "Anxiety is the existential basis of our addiction to alcohol."
- **WRITE** Write daily about your fears and "*{#1 #2 #3}* the three fear questions."
- **TALK** Call your sponsor and other members of the group to discuss fear.
- **PRACTICE DAILY MEDITATION / PRAYER** Call on a higher power.

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE- What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of my fear inventory?
What are the underlying fears we try to avoid by using alcohol?

Points of Focus and Reflection. (Consider pp. 67: 3-68: 3)
A. <u>Who-How-What</u> ***The word "fear."*** (67: 3) We may treat fear, or any other problem, as we do resentments. (See 69: 3) Begin with relaxation / centering silence.
Use the same page 65 three-column format to take an inventory of your fears.
Fear Inventory

Who: People, institutions, and principles that cause me fear. "*#1* When did I first have this fear?"	**How? How have they frightened me? "*#2* Why do I have this fear?"**	**What? What part of my self has been affected and how have I reacted to it?**

1.) First Column: <u>Who</u>? "Who threatened me?" **1st Fear Question "*{#1}*When did I first have this fear?" (See 68: 1)**
We reviewed our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them. (68: 1) List your fears and the first time you had them. We find that we are fearful of everything and everyone.
Fear Inventory

Who: People that cause me fear. "*#1* When did I first have this fear?"
Mr. Brown

2.) Second Column: <u>How</u>? "How did they threaten me?" **2nd Fear Question: "*{#2}*Why do I have this fear?" (See 68: 1)** How did self-reliance fail me?

We asked ourselves why we had them. (68: 1) We literally ask over and over and over for each circumstance and every response:

- "Why do I have this fear?"
- "Why do I fear that?"
- "And the reason I fear that?"etc. (Our very being feels threatened.)
- *Wasn't it because self-reliance failed us?* (68:1)

Fear Inventory

Who: People, that cause me fear. "*#1* When did I first have this fear?"	**How? How have they frightened me? "*#2* Why do I have this fear?"**
Mr. Brown	*Told my wife of my mistress.*

3.) Third Column <u>What</u>? "What part of my life instinct was hurt or threatened, and how did I react to it?"

- Which of our instinctive social/self-esteem and security and sexual needs, desires and actor's roles were threatened and at play in our fear reactions? [*12&12*, 49: 0]

Fear Inventory

Who: People that cause me fear. "*#1* When did I first have this fear?"	**How? How have they frightened me? "*#2* Why do I have this fear?"**	**What? What part of self has been affected and how have I reacted to it?**
Mr. Brown	*Told my wife of my mistress.*	*Self-esteem (fear) Sex relations Personal relationship*

B. ***We Turned Back to the List.*** (66: 3) Meditation / Prayer ***** – Ask for help.

- **Trust Higher Power rather that Self-Reliance**.
  - **3rd Fear Question: "*{#3}*May I share feelings and experiences of courage about *trusting and relying* on my higher power, as found through the practice of this program?"** (See 68: 2)
  - [Courage: (heart, inner strength) acting in the face of fear.]
  - *We trust infinite God* [of our understanding] *rather than our finite selves*. (68: 2) *We let* [our higher power] *demonstrate, through us, what* [our higher power] *can do*. (68: 3) [See also 49: 1; 62: 3] What does this mean? Is this what the program of action is all about?
- ***Our Own Mistakes*** (67: 2) **<u>Where</u>** had we been Selfish, Dishonest, Self-seeking or Inconsiderate? (67: 2; 69: 1) "Where am I responsible?"
  - We write precisely and in detail about our reactions to fear situations and Third Column threatened instincts.
- ***When We Saw Our Faults We Listed Them***. (67: 2) [See *motives* 86: 2]
  - *But did not we, ourselves, set the ball rolling?* (67: 3) "What did I do?" The effects of our self-centered fear.

C. Step 4 Fear Turnaround <u>Willing</u> to change * Relax Meditation / Prayer

- [Optional: God of my understanding, I pray that my fear be removed and my attention directed to being who you would have me be today. May thy will, not mine, be done. (See 68: 3)]

FEAR

STEP 4 Fear Inventory Form

The Big Book authors indicate that the best way to deal with our fears is to do exactly what we did with resentments: We write them down; we consider them carefully; we look at what part we played in creating them or in reacting to them; we list what our motives were in playing that part. (See 69: 3) Expand on this list as desired. Use multiple pages.

The word "fear"... somehow touches about every aspect of our lives. … It set in motion trains of circumstances which brought us misfortune we felt we didn't deserve. (67: 3)

…….

Person **16.**

Institution

Principle I fear. **17.**

"*{#1}*When did I first have this fear?" (See 68: 1)

1. **18.**

2. **19.**

3. **20.**

4. **21.**

5. **22.**

6. **23.**

7. **24.**

8. **25.**

9. **26.**

10. **27.**

11. **28.**

12. **29.**

13. **30**

14. **31.**

15. **32.**

Etc., etc.

FEAR

Step 4-Fears Fill in Second and Third Columns
Make multiple copies or expand these templates into your own notebook

1. First Column: <u>Who</u> threatened me? 1st Fear question: "*{#1}*When did I first have this fear?" (See 68: 1) Inventory one fear at a time.

2. Second Column: <u>How</u> did they threaten me? 2nd Fear question: "*{#2}*Why do I have this fear?" *We asked ourselves why we had them.* (68: 1) We literally ask over and over and over for each circumstance and every response, "Why do I have this fear?" "And why do I fear that?" "And what is the reason I fear that?" Etc., etc. We fear for our very existence. *Wasn't it because self-reliance failed us?* (68: 1) We write just in this second column for now.

3. Third Column: <u>What</u> life instincts threatened?
Which of our actor's roles (60: 4) or instinctive social/self-esteem and security and sexual needs and desires were threatened and at play in our reactions? *Our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions… our security… our personal or sex relations…were hurt…threatened*…[or] *had been interfered with*. (64: 3 - 65: 0,1) [<u>and we reacted</u>!]

First Column: Who? *Fears*- "*{#1}*When did I first have this fear?" (68: 1)	**Second Column: How? *Cause*- "*{#2}*Why do I have this fear?" And that one? Etc., etc.**	**Third Column: What? *Affects my*- I reacted to threats to these instincts.**

FEAR

STEP 4 Fear Turnarounds

For every Third Column situation and our fear reaction, we fill in our 'turnarounds.'
Make multiple copies or expand in your notebook.

Where am I responsible? *But did not we, ourselves, set the ball rolling?* (67: 3)

Write our Motives. *Referring to our list again. Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened*? (67: 2)
We write down and share precisely and in detail what our motives were. [*motives* 86: 2]
…….
Where was I selfish? (67: 2) [Concern for self regardless of others. Self-absorbed.]
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Where was I dishonest? (67: 2) [A tendency to deceit, conceal our true character, lack perspective. We believed our own lies.]
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Where was I self-seeking (67: 2) **or inconsiderate?** (69: 1) [Concern for self over – or under – others.]
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

FEAR

Where was I frightened? (67: 2) [Habitual anxiety: Afraid of losing something we have, not getting something we want, or of being found out for who we are.]
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

…….

Write our faults.

The inventory was ours, not the other man's. When we saw our faults we listed them. We placed them [faults] *before us in black and white.* (67: 2)

Where was I at fault? (67: 2) [A seismic gap between our own or others' deeply held values or our own instincts in collision. Out of bounds? Miss the mark?]
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
(Why do we act this way? Because….see p. 338)
…….
Willing to change.
Step 4 Fear Turnaround Meditation / Prayer.

3rd Fear question: "*{#3}*May I share my feelings and experiences about trusting and relying on the higher power of my understanding?" (See 68: 2, 3)
-
-
-
-

[Optional: God of my understanding, I pray that you remove my fear and direct my attention to being who you would have me be today. May thy will, not mine, be done. (See 68: 3)]

SEX

SESSION 11 SEX INVENTORY
STEP 4 How It Works *Relationships (Including Sex)* (64-65)

***Sex conduct*. (69: 0)** ***Whom had we hurt?* (69: 1)**

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read about the relationship / sex conduct inventory (7 paragraphs BB pp. 68 – 70). The inventory will help you note certain old ideas and behaviors that do not work to give peace of mind, and exchange them for others that work better.
- **WRITE** Write about how your behavior hurt others and yourself. Such as:
  - "Have my relationship or sexual behaviors been based in selfishness or love?"
  - "Have I had difficulties with trust, or being a partner, and with making commitments?"
  - "Have I used sex or other behaviors to fill the spiritual void inside myself?"
- **TALK** Talk about this topic with your sponsor and other group members.
- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION MEDITATION / PRAYER**

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my conduct in relationships, sexual and otherwise?

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider pp. 68: 4-70: 2)
A. Who-How-What We Make a List: *Now about sex*. (68: 4) *We got this all down on paper and looked at it*. (69: 1) *We all have sex problems. We'd hardly be human if we didn't*. (69: 0) Relaxation Meditation / prayer: ask for help.
Use the same three-column format to take an inventory of your relationship / sex behavior. (See 69: 3)

1.) First Column: Who? "Who have I hurt?" (See 69: 1)

- *We reviewed our own conduct over the years past.* (69: 1) List all the people, institutions and principles you have caused trouble for (including yourself) through your sexual conduct and relationship behaviors. [Also *Harm we have done ourselves, 12&12*, (79: 3)]
- One act of sexual and relationship misconduct can hurt many different people.

Relationship / Sex Inventory as in *this example* (65: 2)

Who have I hurt?
My wife *My mistress*

2.) Second Column: How? "How have I hurt them?"

- We can hurt someone in many, many ways. These include by having or not having sex with them, by creating jealousy and flirting with someone else, or by being lost in fantasies and obsessions about our hidden relationship / sexual desires.

Relationship / Sex Inventory as in *this example* (65: 2)

Who have I hurt?	How did I hurt them?
My wife-	*-My mistress. Overbearing*
My mistress-	*-Unreasonable. Unjust*

3.) Third Column: <u>What</u>? "What part of my Self was affected?"

- What did your self-willfulness lead to?
- We were most often seeking something more than simply sex. Were we trying to feel proud, or raise our self-esteem, or fulfill our instincts or desires for emotional security, or material security? What about our actor's roles? (60: 4)

Relationship / Sex Inventory as in *this example* (65: 2)

Who have I hurt?	**How did I hurt them?**	**What part of my Self was affected and led me to act?**
My wife- *My mistress-*	*-My mistress. Overbearing* *-Unreasonable. Unjust*	*Self esteem (fear)* *Sex relations Security* *Personal relationships*

B. Nine Relationship Questions [1 – 9] * "<u>Where</u> am I responsible?" [*motives* 86: 2]

- **Motives** [**1**]***<u>Where</u>*** *had we been selfish,*
- [**2**]*dishonest,* or
- [**3**]*inconsiderate* [*self-seeking*]? (69: 1)
- [**4**]*Whom had we hurt*? (69: 1) [See First Column]
- **Feelings Created** [**5**]*Did we unjustifiably arouse jealousy,*
- [**6**]*suspicion* or
- [**7**]*bitterness*? (69: 1)
- [**8**] **Fault** *Where were we at fault* …. (69: 1) [Out of bounds? Miss the mark?]
- **What Should We Have Done?** [**9**]W*hat should we have done instead*? (69: 1)

In this way we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future [relationship and] *sex life*. (69: 2) *Whatever our ideal turns out to be, we must be willing to grow toward it*. [69: 3]

C. Step 4 Relationship/Sex Turnaround <u>Willing</u> to change

- *We subjected each relation to this test – was it selfish or not*? (69: 2)
- *We must be **willing** to make amends where we have done harm*…. (69: 3)
- *Counsel with persons is often desirable...* (69-70)
- *If sex is very troublesome, we throw ourselves the harder into helping others. This takes us out of ourselves. It quiets the imperious urge….* (70: 2)

- *** Three Meditations / Prayers**. We act as agents of the higher power of our understanding. (49: 1; 62: 3; 68: 2, 3)
  - **We <u>ask</u> God**: *We asked God*[of our understanding] *to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them.* (69: 2)
  - **We <u>let</u> God**. …*We let God be the final judge*. (70: 0)
  - **We <u>relax</u> <u>meditate / pray</u>**: *In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter*. (69: 3) *We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing*. (70: 2)

SEX

STEP 4 Relationship / Sex (pp. 64 – 65) Inventory Forms

Make multiple copies or expand these templates into your own notebook.

<u>Who</u>? ***Whom had we hurt?*** **(69: 1)**
We reviewed our own conduct over the years past. (69: 1) List all the people, institutions, and principles we have caused trouble for through our sexual conduct and relationship behaviors. Work down our list from top to bottom, just writing names for now. Ignore the Second and Third columns for the time being.

……

Person **Institution** **Principle I hurt**	**16.** **17.**
1.	**18.**
2.	**19.**
3.	**20.**
4.	**21.**
5.	**22.**
6.	**23.**
7.	**24.**
8.	**25.**
9.	**26.**
10.	**27.**
11.	**28.**
12.	**29.**
13.	**30**
14.	**31.**
15.	**32.** **Etc, etc.**

SEX

Step 4- Inventory *Relationships (including Sex)* (64-65)
Fill in Second and Third Columns
Make multiple copies or expand these templates into your own notebook.

1, First Column: <u>Who</u>? "Who did I hurt?" (See 69: 1)
Inventory one name at a time.

2. Second column: <u>How</u>? "How did I hurt them?"
We reviewed our own conduct…. (69: 1) We list all the ways we have hurt others by our conduct. This includes how we hurt someone by having or not having sex with them, or by having sex with someone other than them, or by not being present with them and for them when we are lost in fantasies, etc. We write just in this second column for now.

3. Third Column: <u>What</u>? "What part of self affected?"
What instinct or part of my 'self,' which of my roles, led to my conduct? *Our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions…our security…our personal or sex relations...,*[etc.] (64: 3-65: 0,1) We were most often seeking something more than simply sex.

First Column: Who? Name: Who I hurt.	**Second Column: How? Cause: How I hurt them.**	**Third Column: What? What part of myself led me to do what I did.**

…

SEX

Relationship and Sex Turnarounds

For every Second Column and Third Column situation and event, fill in sex and relationship 'turnarounds.'
Make multiple copies or expand in your notebook.

The nine 'sex and relationship questions' [**1 – 9]**
*We reviewed our own conduct over the years past. **Where** had we been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate? Whom had we hurt? Did we unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness? Where were we at fault, what should we have done instead? We got this all down on paper and looked at it*. (69: 1) [See *motives* 86: 2]

…….

[1] Where was I selfish? (67: 2) [Concern for self regardless of others. Self-absorbed.]
-
-
-
-

[2] Where was I dishonest? (67: 2) [A tendency to deceit, conceal our true character, lack perspective. We believed our own lies.]
-
-
-
-

[3] Where was I self-seeking (67: 2) **or inconsiderate?** (69: 1)? [Concern for self over – or under – others.]
-
-
-
-

Where was I frightened? (67: 2) [Habitual anxiety: Afraid of losing something we have, not getting something we want, or of being found out for who we are.]
-
-
-
-

[4] Whom did I hurt? (69: 1) [To knock, strike, upset, offend.] (See First Column)
-
-
-
-

[5] Where did I arouse jealousy? (69: 1) [Resentment, envy, and fear of being displaced in one's affections.]
-
-
-
-

[6] Where did I arouse suspicion? (69: 1) [Expectation or dread of something wrong.]
-
-
-
[7] Where did I arouse bitterness? (69: 1) [Animosity. Grievous to the mind, etc.]
-
-
-
[8] Where was I at fault? (67: 2) [A seismic gap between our own deeply held values or our own instincts in collision. Out of bounds? Miss the mark?]
-
-
-
[9] What could I have done instead? *What should we have done instead*? (69: 1)
-
-
-
Was I selfish? *We subjected each relation to this test - was it selfish or not?* (69: 2)
(Why do we act this way? Because….see p. 338)
-
-
-
Sane and sound ideals for a future sex / relationship life: *We tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life*. (69: 2)
-
-
-
Am I willing to grow toward these ideals? *Whatever our ideal turns out to be, we must be willing to grow toward it*. (69: 3)
-
-
-
People with whom I will take counsel on sex / relationship matters: *Counsel with persons is often desirable...* (70: 0)
-
-
.....
Willing to change.

Step 4 Relationship / Sex Turnaround Meditations/Prayers

- We **ask** God: *We asked God* [of our understanding] *to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them*. (69: 2)
- We **let** God: …*We let God* [of our understanding] *be the final judge*. (70: 0)
- We **relax** meditate / pray: *In meditation, we ask God* [of our understanding] *what we should do about each specific matter*. (69: 3) *We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing*. (70: 2)

SESSION 12 STEP 4 How It Works REVIEW

Grudge List – One Group Member's Pocket Treatment WRITE YOUR OWN!

I read Step 4, pp. 64-71 in *Alcoholics Anonymous* to examine three of my blocks to my higher power: resentment, fear, and the harms done in my relationships / sex conduct. I list my assets too. *We set them on paper*. (64: 3) I begin and end writing times with meditation / prayer. With practice, this inventory method takes me but a moment. My reasonable best is good enough.

1.) 1ST Working of Grudge List (64: 3-65: 2): WHO-HOW-WHAT?

A. First Column: WHO? "Who hurt or threatened me?" (64: 3)

- I list the names of people, places, and things that cause me to be angry, irritable, unreasonable, and discontented. I put them all down. At this time I do not say what they did, or why they bother me. I just make the list of who did it.
- **First Column lesson**: My head is full of resentments. There is no room for conscious contact with my higher power.

Grudge List (See *example* on page 65 of Big Book.)

First Column: Who? Who hurt or threatened me?
Mr. Brown

B. Second Column: HOW? "How have they hurt or threatened me?" (65: 0)

- After I am done with the list of names of people, places, and things that make me irritable, unreasonable, and discontent, I am ready to fill in the Second Column. For each First Column name, I state simply how they hurt me, what happened, what they (or I) did that makes me feel the way I do.
- **Second Column lesson**: It is less who the person is and more how his/her behavior made me angry. May I begin forgiveness of myself and others here?

Grudge List

First Column: Who? Who hurt or threatened me?	**Second Column: How? How did they hurt me?**
Mr. Brown	*May get my job.*

C. Third Column: WHAT? "What part of my Self was hurt or threatened and that I reacted to?" (64: 3, 65: 1)

- Now for each event in the Second Column, I write down in the Third Column what instincts of my Self were hurt or threatened by the person, place, or thing. I consider the 'three S's of Self': Security (material and emotional), Society/Self-esteem (fear for very existence), Sex (and relationship, companionship) instincts. [See *12&12*, p. 49: 0] Also the 'actor's roles' I play. How do my own negative feelings and reactions, my own worn out defenses, affect me?
- **Third Column lesson**: I discover that what leads me to a drink is not who or how they hurt me, but **the way I RE-ACT** to what part of myself that was threatened. My own reactions and my own thought-habits lead me to drink.

Grudge List

First Column: Who? Who Hurt or Threatened Me?	**Second Column: How? How have they hurt me?**	**Third Column: What? What part of my Self was affected and that I reacted to?**
Mr. Brown	*May get my job.*	*Self-esteem (fear)* *Security*

STEP 4 REVIEW

2.) 2ND Working of Grudge List (65: 3-66: 2): **WHY?** "Why must I change?" Resentment is a waste of time. My anger leads to indignation and self-pity. I will drink again if I think this way. If I drink I will die spiritually, mentally, and physically.

3.) 3RD Working of Grudge List (66: 3-67: 1): WHEN? "When I am ready, what do I do?" *They, like ourselves, were sick too. We asked God to help us. We avoid retaliation*. (67: 0,1) Relaxation Meditation / prayer. *****

4.) 4TH Working of Grudge List (67: 2): **WHERE?** "Where am I responsible?" *Disregard the other person involved entirely*. (67: 2)

- Now that I have completed the three column chart, I ask myself: What have I done to cause myself to feel this way? When have I done this before?
- What did I do in my conduct in relationship to this person, place, or thing to cause me to feel *restless, irritable and discontented*? (xxviii: 4) Do I have unreasonable expectations? Have I been acting out of fear? What am I afraid of? Do my own reactions lead me to be hurt and to hurt others? How old is my behavior?
    - **Other Columns Lessons**: What is my part? [See *motives* 86: 2]
        - Where was I **selfish** (self-absorbed)?
        - Where was I **dishonest** (believing my own lies, or not genuine)?
        - Where was I **self-seeking** (wanting to control or be controlled by someone else)? (67: 2)
        - Where was I **frightened** (where did self-reliance fail me)? (68 :1)
        - Where was I **at fault** (out of bounds, or missing the mark)?
        - What could I have done instead? (69: 1,3)

- Answers to these questions will help me find my character defects, shortcomings, defenses, and the *exact nature of our wrongs* that I will address in Step 5 (59: 2). [*We learned that if we were seriously disturbed, our first need was to quiet that disturbance, regardless of who or what we thought caused it. 12&12*, 47: 2]
- [AND: I may write about how these old worn out defenses blocked me from growing up and growing spiritually – false pride, perfectionism, being phony, selfishness, impatience, self-pity, resentments, intolerance, alibis, dishonest thinking, putting things off, guilt and shame, fear, taking things for granted, etc., etc.]

STEP 4 TURNAROUNDS WILLING to change * MEDITATION / PRAYER:

- **Anger**: The one that hurt or threatened me is also a sick person. I deeply wish for them (and me) the same serenity and peace of mind that I would have for myself. God, of my understanding, save me from being hurt, threatened, insulted, or angry. How may I help them? (67: 0; 552: 1) (I say this for myself too)
- **Fear**: I pray that my fear be removed and my attention directed to being who you would have me be today. May thy will, not mine, be done. (68: 3)
- **Relationship/Sex**: *We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing*.(70: 2)
- **Willing to change**: Today I may meditate, go to a meeting, talk with my sponsor so I am more open to my higher power and less restless, irritable and discontent. Today I do not have to be hurt or to hurt myself, and I do not have to drink.

III

PART III

SESSIONS 13 - 20
STEPS 5 – 12
RELAXATION FOCUS – MEDITATIONS / PRAYERS

STEP 5
***We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. …We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator*. (75: 2)**
We thank God [of our understanding] ***from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better*. (75: 3)**

STEP 6
We ask God [of our understanding] ***to help us be willing*. (76: 1)**

STEP 7
***My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen*. (76: 2)**

STEP 8
***If we haven't the will to do this, we ask until it comes*. (76: 3)**

STEP 9
Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God [of our understanding] ***and to the people about us*. (77: 0)**
***Reminding ourselves that we have decided to go to any lengths to find a spiritual experience, we ask that we be given strength and direction to do the right thing, no matter what the personal consequences may be*. (79: 1)**
***…Asking each morning in meditation that our Creator show us the way of patience, tolerance, kindliness and love.* (83: 1)**

***The spiritual life is not a theory. We have to live it.* (83: 2)**

STEP 10
Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God [of our understanding]***'s will into all of our activities*.**
How can I best serve Thee – Thy will (not mine) be done. **(85: 1)**

STEP 11
We ask God [of our understanding]***'s forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken*. (86: 1)**
***We ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self seeking motives*. (86: 2)**
We ask God for inspiration…. (86: 3)
…Period of meditation…prayer that we be shown all through the day what our next step is to be, that we be given whatever we need to take care of such problems. We ask especially for freedom from self-will…. (87: 1)
***Thy will be done*. (88: 0)**

[Optional: ***Lord, make me a channel of thy peace—that where there is hatred, I may bring love—that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness—that where there is discord, I may bring harmony—that where there is error, I may bring truth—that where there is doubt, I may bring faith—that where there is despair, I may bring hope—that where there are shadows, I may bring light—that where there is sadness, I may bring joy. Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted—to understand, than to be understood—to love, than to be loved. For it is by self-forgetting that one finds. It is by forgiving that one is forgiven. It is by dying that one awakens to Eternal Life. Amen.*** *12&12* 99: 3]

STEP 12
***…The truth that faith alone is insufficient. To be vital, faith must be accompanied by self sacrifice and unselfish, constructive action*. (93: 2)**
Lay out the kit of spiritual tools…. (95: 1) If he is to find God [of one's understanding] ***the desire must come from within*. (95: 3)**
***We have no monopoly on God; we merely have an approach that worked with us*. (95: 4)**
***Helping others…(97: 1) Trust in God and clean house*. (98: 2)**
We put ourselves in God [of our understanding]***'s hands…. (100: 1)***

PART III
NOTES ON STEPS 5 - 12

Steps 5 – 8: *We are building <u>an arch</u> through which we shall walk…free…at last. Is our work solid so far*? (75: 3)

STEP 5

My schoolmate visited me and I fully acquainted him with my problems and deficiencies. (Bill's Story, 13: 3)

We lied to others and to ourselves for years about who we were and what we did. Now, we turn and speak straight, in true perspective, to another person. We discuss our strengths and limitations without judgment or blame. We let it all out; we get real. We share the thoughts, actions, and motives in our lives that have worked and have not worked to make us happy, joyous, and free.

We show love and respect for ourselves when we ask others to hear our Fifth Step. As we share our inventory, we become clearer about the exact nature of our old worn out defenses, our wrongs, our defects and shortcomings. Now, we focus on what is behind the patterns of our alcoholism, and the reasons why we acted out in the ways we did. Step 5 calls for courage and a sense of trust in the process of recovery. With courage, we tell the truth about who we are – then, with trust, we listen to the response. Our lonely existence of shame is replaced by humility and self acceptance.

We ourselves are the ones to decide if we have now worked the first five Steps satisfactorily. (76: 0) The measure is our own peace of mind.

STEP 6

I…became willing …. (Bill's Story, 13: 3)

Heard in a meeting: "Step 6: Allow me to NOT do what I 'want' to do." "What am I willing to give up?" "Am I ready for change?"

We become willing to give up our bondage of self-absorption.

We become convinced that we are powerless over our addiction to alcoholic thoughts and behaviors, and that our lives and minds are unmanageable. When we try to manage life, life becomes unmanageable. Our compulsive physical cravings, our

emotional obsessions, and our spiritual void lead us to be restless, irritable, and discontented. These all motivate us to react to life events with selfishness, dishonesty, self-seeking, and fear.

We are worn out.

We are dishonest when we do not see the reality of what is unfolding before us in true perspective and proportion. We are selfish and self-seeking in that our own self-centered desire, disinterest, or disgust are the criteria by which we judge and react to life. [*12 & 12,* 92: 3 – 93: 0] We are fearful as we anticipate the sense of loss that will happen if we do not get what we desire, or lose what we have, or we are found out for who we are and what we have done. [*12 & 12,* 76: 2]

We are exhausted.

And we drink. Or we act and think as though we have been drinking, on an emotional dry bender. Now we are exhausted with our way, we are worn out by our habitual choices; we are sick and tired of the consequences of doing things our way. Our way *did not work*. (52: 3) In Step 6, when these things become objectionable to us, we are ready to give them up. This is a gift of desperation. When we could not spot or note our thought-habits and behaviors, we could not get rid of them. Today, when we can see and name them, we can renounce them, turn them over and change.

STEP 7

…to have my new found Friend take them away, root and branch. (Bill's Story, 13: 3)

Heard in a meeting: "Step 7: Allow me to DO what I do 'not want' to do." "What am I going to do instead?" "Will I ask for help to make these changes?"

We may think of a shortcoming as falling short of our potential. In Step 7 we are going to practice new things in our lives, and a *personality change sufficient to bring about recovery*, a conversion, begins to take place. (567: 1) We are asking for help and strength from the power that we discover within us, through the discipline of the practice of working this program as understood by the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. While we cannot - nor should not - deny our instincts, we are asking the higher power of our understanding to remove us from that habitual and insatiable demand for the satisfaction of our instincts beyond our true needs. [Optional: *12&12*, 71: 1]

The effort, or the act of working this Step, is in the asking. We are asking for help to have wisdom and clarity, to be made strong. How we go about asking – through prayer, through meditation or other spiritual practices, or by thinking it over – is up to us. We are not going to ask just once, we will ask again and again throughout our lifetimes until in a moment of grace we find strength to go on without drinking or using. We need spiritual strength to go forth into the world and take those actions that are consistent with, and even demanded by, the understanding we have from our quiet time alone with our higher power. We take refuge in and cooperate with this 'inner knowing' in the process of letting go, of opening ourselves to change. We have come to see that we are a part of, rather than apart from, this universal family. This true perspective of humility gives us peace of mind. [*12 & 12*, 48: 0; 58: 1; 72: 2]

STEP 8

We made a list of people I had hurt or toward whom I felt resentment. (Bill's Story, 13: 3)

Steps 8 and 9 are powerful tools to address guilt and shame.

Step 8 is the beginning of a process of healing relationships. We do not just look at ourselves; we must actually look at our roles in relation to others. This takes hard work and effort. We know who we have really harmed. These disturbances live on inside of us until we find a way to honor our feelings. Step 8 is a way out of remorse and regret. We do not let a long list distract us from the most difficult and painful relationships and the true amends we have to make.

With our sponsor, we discuss each person on our list and the potential amends we might make. We will not have to avoid anyone. We will not have to be afraid of being found out for some neglected responsibility. Instead of *being servile or scraping*, of feeling shame and guilt or of feeling forever less than, now *as God's people we stand on our feet; we don't crawl before anyone*. (83: 3) With a sense of inclusion comes a sense of acceptance. We grow in the program to be true companions with others and ourselves.

Steps 9 – 12: Heard in a meeting: "We practice Steps 9, 10, 11 and 12 on a daily basis."

STEP 9

I expressed my entire willingness to approach these individuals, admitting my wrong. Never was I to be critical of them. I was to right all such matters to the utmost of my ability. (Bill's Story, 13:3)

Heard in a meeting: "To make an amend = make an apology + change behavior."

The goal is to directly make amends to those we have harmed, not excusing our behavior, blaming others, trying to prove something, or arguing about those events. This is not a secret way to show that we are right and they are wrong. We set things straight.

[Optional: Step 9 in the *12 & 12* gives us clear cut directions for making amends:

- *First we will wish to be reasonably certain we are on the A.A. beam.*
    - *Then we are ready to go to these people*
    - *to tell them what A.A. is,*
    - *and what we are trying to do.*
- *Against this backdrop we can*
    - *freely admit the damage we have done*
    - *and make our apologies.*
    - *We can pay, or promise to pay*
    - *whatever obligations, financial or otherwise, we owe.*

12 & 12, 84: 1]

The Big Book authors relate how another of AA's founders, Dr. Bob, made his amends. This was on June 10, 1935, which is considered the anniversary date of Alcoholics Anonymous:

One morning he took the bull by the horns and set out to tell those he feared what his trouble had been. He found himself surprisingly well received, and learned that many knew of his drinking. Stepping into his car, he made the rounds of people he had hurt. He trembled as he went about, for this might mean ruin, particularly to a person in his line of business. At midnight he came home exhausted, but very happy. He has not had a drink since. (A Vision for You, 156: 1, 2)

Step 9 gives us a way to make restitution and to set right the damage we have caused in the past. We can admit the wrong and not feel we are groveling or obliged to hide in shame. Making amends is a commitment to a continuous process of change. We will spend the rest of our lives practicing the spiritual principles that will bring real change in the way we are partners with people.

STEP 10

I was to test my thinking by the new God-consciousness within. (Bill's Story, 13: 4)

Heard in a meeting: "If we are not growing in recovery, we are moving backward toward active addiction."

The addictive diseases are characterized by denial, self deception, isolation and loneliness. In Steps 4 – 9 we act to identify and change that in us which blocks us from a power greater than ourselves. In Step 10, we practice the principles of Steps 4 - 9 in real time on a daily basis. This turns the slogan "one day at a time" into a philosophy of life.

Step 10 invites the practice of continuous awareness of our intentions, motives, and behaviors, and guards against persistent defects or new problems. We consider our conduct and thought patterns in order to initiate change. It is not so much to see what is wrong, but to see what IS. When we are attentive, we may inventory ourselves at any time of the day. Also we may retreat to places of quiet and work the Steps in a more formal way annually or semiannually.

We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition. (Into Action, 85: 1)

STEP 11

I was to sit quietly when in doubt asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me. (Bill's Story, 13: 4)

In Step 11, our work is to seek to improve the conscious contact we have always had with *an unsuspected inner resource,* (567: 4-568: 0) which is our higher power. As we work through the Steps, we discover more of the nature of this spirit. Yet it is often easier to identify what is not the God of our understanding's will for us than what is. It is understood that it is not God's will for us to drink and lapse into active alcoholism.

Eventually, all things merge into one. And through it all is our common experience of healing from alcoholism as this power that is greater than ourselves is made manifest in our lives. Our practice changes as we change. We each grow into an evolving exercise of personal meditation and prayer as we progress on our own spiritual path. May we be cautious that our own private devotions do not take us away from the fellowship.

STEP 12

Spiritual awakening: *It meant the destruction of self-centeredness. ... There was a sense of victory, followed by such a peace and serenity as I had never known.* (Bill's Story, 14: 1, 2)

The result of these steps: *Belief in the power of God, plus enough willingness, honesty, and humility to establish and maintain the new order of things were the essential requirements*. (13: 5-14: 0)

Carry the message: *Particularly was it imperative to work with others as he had worked with me. Faith without works was dead*. (14: 6)

Practice these principles: *My friend emphasized the absolute necessity of demonstrating these principles in all my affairs*. (14: 6)

A spiritual awakening is real because our lives are changed as a result. We can see and feel it. Many of us feel more alive, loving, open, and better able to join fully in life. We come to know the natural joy of things experienced just as they are. We may rest in just being, not 'doing.'That power, whether it is our own best and highest nature or a force beyond ourselves, becomes ours to tap into whenever we are open to it. It guides our actions and provides inspiration for our continued growth. This comes about gradually and slowly as we work the Steps. We grow more and more uncomfortable acting out on our character defects, and begin to feel more at ease practicing spiritual principles and exercising our character assets.

The founding moment of AA was Bill W. sharing his story with Dr. Bob. We can only keep what we have by giving it away, because we reinforce our recovery by sharing it with others. The message of a spiritual awakening perhaps is that we are not alone, we can stay sober, we can recover, and there is hope. We simply present the message of our own story as positively as we can, and remain available to help when we are asked.

We see which Step principles we are meant to practice in each event of life. We are more aware of our old unworkable thought-habits that leap to mind when we react to life events and that dictate our actions. Now we may *pause, ask* for help (87: 3), and then respond in a workable way that contributes to the serenity and peace of mind of all. The positive principles of honesty, selflessness, courage, and compassion arise naturally as we enjoy that *profound alteration in* [our] *reaction to life* that the Big Book authors speak of. (567: 4) The spiritual benefits of our new worthy behaviors are real and will materialize if we work for them. We deeply wish for others as well as for ourselves that we all may be happy, joyous and free. Gratitude becomes the underlying force in all that we do. We let our lives speak.

SESSION 13

STEP 5 Into Action pp 72 – 75

Step 5 Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

***We have a written inventory and we are prepared for a long talk.* (75: 1)**

Step 5 written inventory Take Step 5

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read about Step 5 in Chapter 6, Into Action, pp. 72 – 75. Many read Step 5 in the *12 & 12*. Step 5 is a step out of our isolation.

- **WRITE** Review the work you did on Step 4. Steps 4 and 5 are action Steps that explore denial and self-deception, and contribute to self acceptance. Have you left anything out? Write it down.

- **TALK** Find someone with whom to take Step 5. Let your higher power guide you in finding the right person in the program. You may choose to share different parts of your story with different people. Make an appointment and take the Step.

- **PRACTICE DAILY MEDITATION / PRAYER** We are not alone.

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 5?

- We may read and discuss Chapter 6, pp. 72- 75 having to do with Step 5.
- The actual taking of Step 5 is private and will not occur within the group. However, group members may speak generally about their experiences and share some of their reflective writings about taking Step 5 by the Big Book.
- Suggestion: Be specific and thorough when responding to the session questions. Try to avoid rote 'yes' and 'no' answers.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider 72-75: 3) Cross off the bulleted points.

1.) We are only as sick as our secrets.

a.) Fear

- Step 4 and Step 5 are the most discussed and the most skipped Steps. Why?
- Do I have any fears or reservations about doing this Step? What are they?
- How has working the first four Steps prepared me for taking Step 5?
- Was I so numb that I did not realize my wrongs?

b.) *Admitted to God* [of our own understanding]

- Have I opened myself to the presence of a higher power before going over my inventory with my Fifth Step sponsor? How do I do this?
- How is my Third Step decision reaffirmed by working the Fifth Step?

c.) ***Admitted…to ourselves***

- How am I *very much the actor*? (73: 1)
- Had I been *under constant fear and tension*, and did that make *for more drinking*? (73: 2)

d.) ***Admitted…to another human being***

- What may happen to those who hang on *to some of the worst items in stock*, or have <u>not</u> *told someone else <u>all</u> their life story*? (73: 0)
- How will working Step 5 help me to begin to develop new ways of having relationships?
- Am I *in complete readiness* to *talk to the right person*, (74: 2) and to listen to their response?

2.) ***The exact nature of our wrongs***

- Can I …*get down to causes and conditions*? (64: 0)
- Have I inventoried *my grosser handicaps*? (71: 0)
- What does *the exact nature of our defects* mean? (72: 1) What is behind my alcoholism and the reasons I acted out in the ways I did?
- Why do I need to admit the exact nature – my own basic starting point / motive – of my wrongs and not simply the wrongs themselves?
- What is the distinction between my *motives* (86: 2) and my actions or behaviors?
- The 5th Step promises: Do I now feel I *can look the world in the eye*? (75: 2)

III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 5 PRINCIPLES

- How may I practice being honest with myself, accepting who I am, both the good and the harm that I do, and living up to my potential?
- Where am I responsible and where am I not responsible? What patterns would I rather not repeat in the future?
- How may I practice the courage to share the parts of myself that should *never see the light of day*? (73: 2)
- How may I practice being committed to trusting this process, trusting another person, and trusting myself to do it?
- How may I practice relying on my higher power, relying on the program of recovery and relying on the fellowship?

* *

IV TAKE STEP 5

When we decide who is to hear our story, we waste no time…. We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past. (75: 1, 2)

When we have admitted to God of our understanding, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs, then according to the Big Book and under the conditions of this day, we have taken Step 5.

An optional written Step 5 inventory is on p. 91 of this workbook. The actual taking of this Step will occur outside the group. The group may decide to observe taking Step 5 in a manner similar to the way some AA groups celebrate anniversaries.

STEP 5 WRITTEN INVENTORY [optional] **(Step 8 inventory on reverse)**
Step 5 Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Items to share in the Fifth Step that are not listed in the Step 4 inventories.
Make multiple copies or expand this template in your own notebook.

-Am I identifying *the exact nature* of my wrongs, that is, what is behind my alcoholism and the reasons I acted out in the ways I did?

-Am I listing all those behaviors and parts of myself that I had vowed would *never see the light of day*? (73: 2)

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STEP 8 WRITTEN INVENTORY [optional] **(Step 5 inventory on reverse)**
Step 8 Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Make multiple copies or expand this template in your own notebook.

-I complete the list of people I have harmed that I compiled in Step 4.
-I list what I did.
-I list and discuss with my sponsor what an amend might look like.
(I do not yet concern myself with whether or not I should, or will be able to, actually make the amends.)

All persons harmed.	**What I did.**	**What amends might be.**
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
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-	-	-

SESSION 14

STEP 6 Into Action p. 76: 1

Step 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
Let go. **(76: 1)** ***We ask God*** [of our understanding] ***to help us be willing.*** **(76: 1)**

Step 6 written inventory **Take Step 6**

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Review Into Action p. 75: 3. Read of Step 6 on p. 76: 1. (See also 263: 0, 1, 2) Many read Step 6 in the *12 & 12*.
  - Have you done the Step work so far *to* [your] *satisfaction?* (75: 3-76: 1)
  - Heard in a meeting: "When you were ready, you let your drinking go. You can do the same with your other defects and shortcomings."

- **WRITE** List all of your character defects from Steps 4 and 5 and write brief descriptions of them. [Defect: A lack; an imperfection. To fall short; to miss the mark.] [Change: To substitute something else for. To exchange.]
  - You may have become so attached to your defenses, patterns, masks and actor's roles (60: 4) -your defects- that you have begun to identify with them.
  - Yet there comes a point when it is more painful to stay in the old patterns than it is to risk something new and unknown.
  - The key to Step 6 is to maintain the honesty developed through all the Steps, and to be patient with yourself.

- **TALK** Call your sponsor and other members of the group to discuss your thoughts on Step 6.

- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION MEDITATION / PRAYER**.

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 6?

- [Optional: *Having been granted a perfect release from alcoholism, why then shouldn't we be able to achieve by the same means a perfect release from every other difficulty or defect? This is a riddle….* (*12&12* 64: 2)]
- Consider having a round robin discussion about one particular defect, and the group's experiences with Step 6 by the Big Book.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider 75:3-76: 1) Try saying these out loud.

1.) Awareness of Character Defects

- In what ways are my defects really basic human traits that have been distorted by my own self-centeredness?
- In what specific ways am I addicted to outside things to change my feelings?
- Can I list each defect I have and the ways I act on it?

- How do I feel when I act out on each defect? What feelings do my defects help me change or avoid? Is every defect another face of fear?
- What would my life be like without each defect?

2.) Willingness

- Am I ready to become willing?
- Which of my unwanted defects am I dismayed to find are still here?
- Which of my defects have I had most of my life, and are like survival skills? How did each defect (or pattern or defense or role or mask) protect me?
- Which unhealthy behaviors do I seem to repeat over and over?
- Do I fear I cannot change? Does my personality seem to equal my defects?
- How have I changed so far? What defects do I no longer have to act on?
- Can I see the principles of 12 Step recovery as being the opposite of my character defects?
- Am I *entirely ready* (59: 2) to let my higher power set my character defects at one remove from me?

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3.) Letting Go

- When will the pain of holding on to my defects of character become greater than my fear of change?
- Have many of my thought-habits brought nothing but pain and degradation to my life? Do I need help in dealing with them?
- How may I let go through prayer and meditation and reflect on my higher power?
- How does my surrender deepen in this step? Can I relax since I do not do it alone?
- What action can I take that shows that I am entirely ready?

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III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 6 PRINCIPLES

- How may I demonstrate my commitment to persevere in my recovery today?
- How am I willing to act differently?
- How may I increase my trust in the God of my understanding by working Step 6?
- How may I practice the principle of self-acceptance, even when once again I act on a defect against my will?
- Can I <u>not</u> do what the alcoholic in me says, "I want to do" today?
- Do I understand this is just for today, one day at a time?

* *

IV TAKE STEP 6 We take Step 6 in the first paragraph on BB page 76.

-See page 95 of this workbook for an optional Step 6 written inventory.

As we put our willingness to change into practice, one day at a time, then according to the Big Book, and under the conditions of this day, we take Step 6.

Observe carrying out Step 6 in the manner that your group sees fit.

STEP 6 WRITTEN INVENTORY (optional) **(Step 7 on reverse)**

Step 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Make multiple copies or expand this template in your own notebook.

- Review the list of character defects that you elaborated in writing in Step 4.
- List each defect, and give a definition of it.
- Write about how you act on your character defects, and what effect it has on you and others.
- Ask yourself what feelings you are trying to suppress or change when you act out on the defect?
- What would your life be like without this behavior?
- Which spiritual principle may you apply instead?

…….

Defect:

Definition:

Effect of acting on it:

Feelings involved:

Alternatives:

Defect:

Definition:

Effect of acting on it:

Feelings involved:

Alternatives:

Defect:

Definition:

Effect of acting on it:

Feelings involved:

Alternatives:

Defect:

Definition:

Effect of acting on it:

Feelings involved:

Alternatives:

Etc, etc.

STEP 7 WRITTEN INVENTORY (optional) **(Step 6 on reverse)**
Step 7 Humbly asked him to remove our shortcomings.

Make multiple copies or expand this template in your own notebook.

Every day of the week I may choose a character defect or shortcoming to monitor. How am I doing with it? How am I asking for strength and help? Which spiritual principle am I applying instead?

MONDAY:

Shortcoming: What did I do?	Spiritual principle: What did I do?
-	-
-	-

TUESDAY:

Shortcoming: What did I do?	Spiritual principle: What did I do?
-	-
-	-

WEDNESDAY:

Shortcoming: What did I do?	Spiritual principle: What did I do?
-	-
-	-

THURSDAY:

Shortcoming: What did I do?	Spiritual principle: What did I do?
-	-
-	-

FRIDAY:

Shortcoming: What did I do?	Spiritual principle: What did I do?
-	-
-	-

SATURDAY:

Shortcoming: What did I do?	Spiritual principle: What did I do?
-	-
-	-

SUNDAY:

Shortcoming: What did I do?	Spiritual principle: What did I do?
-	-
-	-

Etc, etc.

SESSION 15

STEP 7 Into Action p. 76: 2

Step 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
Let God [of our understanding] **(76: 1)** ***Grant me strength*. (76: 2)**

Step 7 written inventory Take Step 7

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read Chapter 6, Into Action p. 76, paragraph 2 on Step 7. [See also 265: 0, 1, 2] Many also read Step 7 in the *12&12*.
  - Heard in a meeting: "Humility is our acceptance of who and what we really are, that we are worthwhile, and that we are grateful."

- **WRITE** Write about the character defects and shortcomings you act out on, and the spiritual principles you might use instead. [Shortcoming: Failure to hit a target. To miss the mark. Out of bounds.]
  - Heard in a meeting: "Our defects are never completely removed, but rather replaced with other attributes (God Given!)."
- **TALK** Talk with your sponsor and other members of the group about **y**our experiences with Step 7. Discuss your character defects and what you are doing about them.

- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION MEDITATION / PRAYER**

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 7?

- We may read p. 76: 2 Chapter 6, Into Action on Step 7. Members of the group may be asked to share their experience, strength, and hope on Step 7 by the Big Book. We may each share our writings on Step 7 in a round robin format.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider 76: 2)

1.) *Humbly*: The action of humility

- How has "my way" landed me in difficulty?
- Am I acting as my own higher power? [See *quit playing God*, BB, 62: 3]
- How does my usefulness to myself and others depend on my being balanced?
- How does my gratitude for my life in recovery relate to my staying right size?
- How may I take a new perspective on the world and so act differently?
- How may I grow to have "solution-based" thinking?
- How is *humility* (55: 4) related to *honesty* (58: 1) and *sanity* (5: 5; 37: 1) in regards to my own sense of proportion and perspective?
- AA literature focuses on humility as seeing things in true perspective, as they really are. [Optional, see also *12&12* pp. 48: 0; 58: 1; 72: 2]
- Humility is a sense of our own humanness. We are truly just trying our best.

2.) ***Asked Him*** **: Meditation / Prayer**

- How does the spiritual principle of surrender apply to getting out of the way so a higher power of my understanding can work in my life?
- Have I asked other recovering alcoholics to help me by sharing their experience, strength, and hope in this matter of prayer and meditation?
- How is the Serenity Prayer (*12&12*, 41: 0; 125: 2) an expression of Step 7?
- Do I work very hard to act 'on target,' in ways that oppose my shortcomings?
- Does my higher power do Steps 6 and 7 for me?

3.) ***Remove our shortcomings*****: Practice**

- Why are *defects of character* in Step 6 called *shortcomings* in Step 7? (59: 2)
- How is my *self-centered fear* the *chief activator* of my character defects? [*12&12* 76: 2]
- Can I see the many faces of my fear (my defects) and not deny or overlook them?
- How may I recognize my fear and/or anger, bring it to awareness, and deal with it in a healthy manner? Can I ask for help to change my fears?
- How can I stop building walls, and act instead as if I want to be happy, serene and sane?
- Am I prepared to take an active role in the new and healthier world that I am now a part of?
- Can I ask for the strength to do the practice? What does the term 'practice' mean to me?

III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 7 PRINCIPLES

- Has my sense of perspective been out of proportion lately?
- How may I accept my powerlessness over my shortcomings as well as my alcoholism?
- How may I humbly ask for strength, practice spiritual principles, and get out of my higher power's way?
- Can I become more conscious of my motives and intentions before I act?
- Instead of fear and anger, can I respond with love and patience?
- May I practice trust and being worthy, by practicing being responsible?
- Today, can I do what the alcoholic in me says, "I don't want to do"?
- Have there been times when I have been able to refrain from acting on a character defect and to practice a spiritual principle instead? Do I recognize this as the higher power of my understanding working in my life?

* *

IV TAKE STEP 7 We take Step 7 in the second paragraph on BB page 76.

See page 96 of this workbook for an optional Step 7 written inventory.

Under the conditions of this day, and according to the Big Book, we take Step 7.
You may mark taking Step 7 in the manner you and your group choose. Some form a circle and recite the powerful Step 7 prayer together.

SESSION 16

STEP 8 Into Action pp. 76 - 84

Step 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

***Like a tornado roaring his way through the lives of others*. (82: 3)**

Step 8 written inventory Take Step 8

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read pp. 76 - 84 in Chapter 6, Into Action on Steps 8 and 9. Many will read Step 8 in the *12&12*. We are learning how to live in partnership with all men and women.

- **WRITE** Make a list of all people you have harmed. Write down what you did to those people. Put down what an amends might be.
    - Do not yet concern yourself now with whether or not you should, or will be able to, actually make the amends.

- **TALK** Talk with your sponsor and with other members of the group about whom to include on your list of amends. Step 8 is part action and part attitude: **first** you make a **list**; **second** you become **willing**.
    - Talk with your sponsor about what an amends <u>might</u> look like. (76: 3)

- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION WITH PRAYER / MEDITATION**

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 8?

- We read selections from Into Action pp. 76-84 together. We share our writings.
- Without mentioning names, we talk about those we included on our list.
- Does my list have too many, or too few, people on it? Have I included everyone I have ever interacted with? Did I only include people I committed egregious acts against?

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider 76: 3-77: 1; 78: 2-79: 0; 80: 5; 83: 2, 3)

1.) ***All persons we had harmed–*** **Where had I been at fault?**

- How may I be clear to myself about my responsibility in the wrongs I have done? [Responsible: Able to respond, soberly and appropriately. Accountable. Reliable.]
- How may I accept my responsibility <u>to</u> other people, yet not accept responsibility <u>for</u> other people?
- May I let go of the feeling of responsibility for the way certain people treated me?
- Do I owe amends to people who have also harmed me? (77: 1)
- Have I put my own name on the top of my list of people I have harmed? Why or why not? [see *12&12*, 79: 3-80: 0, 1]

2.) What harms have I committed against the people on my list?

- ***-Business acquaintances***: (76: 4) Did I not cooperate with others or not put in a day's work? Did I pad expense accounts or steal money?
- ***-Friends we have hurt***. (76: 4) Have I gossiped or been emotionally unavailable? Have I stolen from them? Have I failed to keep in contact?
- **-Those *we hate*.** (77: 1) Have I wished ill-will upon them? Have I spoken badly of them? Have I committed the harms described above?
- **-Our creditors**: We *owe money*. (78: 2) Have I failed to admit that money or services are owed? Have I failed to make arrangements to pay what is owed?
- ***-Perhaps we have committed a criminal offense***. (78: 3) Have I paid my fine and done my time? Have I made a commitment not to repeat those crimes?
- ***-We have domestic troubles*.** (80: 5) *The family*, (83: 1) spouse, or *parents*. (82: 2) Have I physically / emotionally / verbally abused my spouse, children, or other family members? Have I been emotionally unavailable to those family members?
- ***-Some people cannot be seen.*** (82: 3) Have I done any or all of the above to those I cannot locate or who have died?

3.) *Willing to make amends to them all*

- What have I done to become willing to make these amends?
- Why am I not willing to make amends with some of the people on my list? Do I have fear of making direct amends? Do I have persistent resentment toward some? Am I unable to see the harm I have caused?
- In making amends, am I still trying to please, or control, or punish, or behave in some other way that interferes with an honest relationship? Will it help to revisit Steps 4 and 5, and Steps 6 and 7 about these issues?
- What would my life be like if I had already made these amends?

III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 8 PRINCIPLES

- How may I move beyond my resentments, and blaming others, and believing I was the innocent victim, and all my other justifications for the harms I caused?
- Are there any names I have not added to my list? Am I willing to add them now?
- Am I beginning to feel compassion and empathy for others, including myself? Describe.
- How may I have peace with my past, so that I may have peace in the present and future?

* *

IV TAKE STEP 8: WRITE THE LIST

We take Step 8 in the third paragraph of BB page 76.
See page 92 of this SbBB workbook for the optional Step 8 written inventory.

When we have finished writing the list of people we have harmed, then according to the Big Book and under the conditions of this day, we have taken Step 8.

Observe taking Step 8 in the manner that you and your group choose.

SESSION 17

STEP 9 Into Action pp. 76 - 84

Step 9. Made direct amends wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

***The spiritual life is not a theory. <u>We have to live it</u>.* (83: 2)**

Take Step 9

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read pages 76 - 84 in Chapter 6, Into Action on Step 9. Many read Step 9 in the *12&12*. *Reparations take innumerable forms*. (79: 1)

- **WRITE** Take a name, and decide what action is needed to re-create the best possible relationship with that person.

- **TALK** Talk with your sponsor and other members of the group. Review the written directions as they are in the Big Book. [Optional *12&12*, 84: 1]
    - Making amends means being able to say you are sorry, that you make mistakes, that you care, and that you are growing and changing.
    - Keep it a pure and simple amend and nothing else.

- **PRACTICE DAILY MEDITATION / PRAYER** We are not alone.

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 9?

- We may read pages 76-84 in Chapter 6, Into Action on Step 9. ~Support is needed to carry out this Step. ~We can only do the part we are responsible for when we make amends.
- Step 9 requires patience, thoughtful self examination, and restraint.
- Group members may share their experiences with this Step by the Big Book.

Points of Focus and Reflection (76: 3-78: 0; 79: 1-80: 1; 81: 1-82: 1; 83: 1-84: 1)

1.) Ask for willingness

- How is making amends a commitment to a continuous process of change?
- Why is making amends more than just saying, "I'm sorry?"
- What about financial amends? What behaviors do I need to amend?
- Do I owe amends to people who have also harmed me? (77: 1)
- Do I owe amends to anyone who is dead? What was special about that person that I might be able to use in planning my amends?
- Am I genuine in making my amends, or do I have hidden motives, such as to gain acceptance or love from someone else, or to prove them wrong and me right?
- Can I let go of the outcome, knowing that I have no control over the other person's response?

2.) ***Direct amends***

- The Big Book states that in making amends:
    - We become ready, and *we have obtained permission*. (80: 1)
    - *We…have consulted with* [our sponsor or] *others*. (80: 1)
    - *We…asked God* [of our understanding] *to help*. (80: 1)
    - *We ask that we be given strength and direction to do the right thing*. (79: 1)
    - *We are trying to put our lives in order…* [and] *to be of maximum service to God and to the people about us*. (77: 0)
    - Face to face, we make *direct amends*. (59: 2)
    - *We go out to our fellows*. (76: 3) *We go…in a helpful and forgiving spirit*. (77: 1) *We secure their consent*. (80: 1)
    - *We will never get over drinking until we have done our utmost to straighten out the past*. (77: 2)
    - We have *a sincere desire to set right the wrong*. (77: 0)
    - *We are there to sweep off our side of the street*. (77: 2)
    - Their *faults are not discussed. We stick to our own*. (78: 0)
    - *Confessing our former ill feeling and expressing our regret*. (77: 1)
    - *We should admit our fault*. (81: 1)
    - *We are sorry for what we have done and…it shall not be repeated*. (81: 1)
- Step 9 Promises: Do I now *know a new freedom and a new happiness*? (83: 4)

3.) Will making direct amends injure them or others?

- Will I be harming the person or others further by making amends?
- When I feel guilty, do I put them in the position of having to take care of me?
- Talk with your sponsor and other group members about how these amends might be made.

III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 9 PRINCIPLES

- How may I accept responsibility for the harm I caused and for repairing that harm? How may I give of myself and be of service to others?
- May I accept that my love and tolerance also extend to myself?
- How may I let go of all my expectations about how my amends will be received?
- For what have I forgiven myself?
- How may I accept that my recovery is the 'living amend' I make to myself?

* *

IV Take Step 9 – Make the amends for this day.

We take Step 9 in paragraph 3 on BB page 76.
We go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. (76: 3)

Upon completing the first three amends or so, we continue Step 9 while proceeding with Step 10, Step 11, and Step 12 on a daily basis.

Mark taking Step 9 in the manner that your group sees fit.

SESSION 18

STEP 10 Into Action pp. 84 - 85

Step 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

***A daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition*. (85: 1)**

Daily Step 10 written inventory Take Step 10

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

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- **READ** Read Chapter 6 Into Action pages 83- 85 in the Big Book. Many read Step 10 in the *12&12*. What does it mean that 'the Promises' directly precede Step 10 in the Big Book?

- **WRITE** Continue your written journal of your reflections. ~Go deeper with a feeling before trying to make it go away. ~If you choose to act out on your feelings in a vengeful or manipulative way, you may have some regrets later on. ~If you are upset your emotional reactions are real and therefore valid, no matter what they are. ~What might your anger-sadness-fear be covering up?

- **TALK** Talk with your sponsor and other members of your group. Step 10 combines self examination (inventory) with making amends.

- **PRACTICE DAILY RELAXATION WITH MEDITATION / PRAYER**

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 10?

- We may share our reflections. One or more members of the group may choose to speak on Step 10 by the Big Book.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider 84: 2-85: 2)

1.) *Continued to take personal inventory*

- How may I work Step 10 to keep me within this day?
- What did I do today that worked and did not work to give me and others serenity and peace of mind? (84: 2) (See page 40 this workbook for Step 10 inventory.)
- Can I determine my responsibility and do what is necessary to set things straight, and let go of the outcome?

2.) *When we were wrong, promptly admitted it.*

- Have I been resentful, selfish, dishonest, or afraid today? (84: 2)
- Today have I allowed myself to become too Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired?
- Have I kept something to myself that I should have discussed with my sponsor?
- Was there fear in my life today? (84: 2)
- Have I harmed others, directly, or indirectly, today? How?

- Do I owe any apologies or amends? Where was I wrong [twisted]? (84: 2)
- Was I out of bounds? Did I make mistakes; miss the mark?
- If I could do it over again, what would I do differently?
- How might I do better next time?

3.) ***We have entered the world of the spirit.*** **(84: 2)** ***Watch. Ask. Turn.***

- Do I *watch* for my selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear as I go through the day? (84: 2)
- Do I *ask* a higher power of my understanding to remove these at once, because I am now watching and I am starting to be awake? (84: 2)
- Do I *turn* that force of my self-willfulness toward good for others? (84: 2)

4.) Step 10 promises

- Have I *ceased fighting anything or anyone – even alcohol*? (84: 3)
- Have I been restored to sanity? (85: 0) Is this the sanity of Step 2?
- Has my spiritual malady been overcome; have I straightened out mentally (meaning the obsession of the mind that takes me to a drink)? (See 64: 3)
- Am I …*recovered*…? (17: 1)

5.) ***We are not cured of alcoholism*** **(85: 1)**

- Is it enough for me just to stay sober? Have I been letting up on my spiritual program of action and resting on my laurels? (85: 1)

III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 10 PRINCIPLES

- How may I not forget how important my happiness and my comfort (my serenity and peace of mind) are, one day at a time?
- How may I do the work of recovery, regardless of how I feel?
- How may I be honest with myself, about myself, while an event is still happening?
- When I make a mistake do I think I am the mistake, or that it was human error?
- What have I done today about which I feel positive?
- How may I know which principles I need to practice in a given situation?

* *

IV TAKE STEP 10 ON A DAILY BASIS

We take Step 10 in the second paragraph on BB page 84.

We continue to take personal inventory and continue to set right any new mistakes as we go along. (84: 2)

According to the Big Book and under the conditions of this day, we practice Step 10 on a daily basis.
Acknowledge taking Step 10 in the manner that you and your group see fit.

See page 40 of this workbook for the optional Step 10 Daily Written Inventory (Assets and Liabilities Checklist.)

SESSION 19

STEP 11 Into Action pp. 85 – 88

Step 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

***We <u>pause</u>…and <u>ask</u>....* (87: 3) *It works – it really does*. (88: 1)**

Take Step 11

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read from Chapter 6, Into Action the bottom of page 85 to the end of the chapter. Many read Step 11 in the *12&12*.

- **WRITE** Continue to write your daily reflections. Continue to make your Step 9 amends, and to take a Step 10 daily inventory.

- **TALK** Continue to discuss your work with your sponsor and other group members.
  - Heard in a meeting: "Being spiritual is being open minded and looking for the gifts in things."
  - Heard in a meeting: "I pray to be who I am and all I am (and not somebody different) – to get a better and clearer sense of my place in the universe."

- **PRACTICE DAILY MEDITATION / PRAYER** Meditation and prayer, like other tools of recovery, are intensely practical. Like all tools, they work better the more we use them. See an optional relaxation practice on p. 14 of this workbook.

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 11?

We review the three meditation / prayer practices of Step 11, BB pp. 85 - 88.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider 85: 3-88: 3)

1.) *Prayer and meditation*

- Step 11 begins with the word *sought* (59: 2), the past tense of "to seek"; how and what am I seeking? Do I have a specific spiritual path?
- What is my understanding of the differences between religion and spirituality? What have I done to explore my own spirituality?
- Do I recognize that a moment of silence is meditation, where I may quiet my mind on a regular basis so that I can gain understanding and knowledge from my higher power – my own *unsuspected inner resource*? (567: 4)
- Heard in a meeting: "Prayer is talking <u>to</u>. Meditation is listening <u>for</u>."

- [Optional: '*Thy will not mine, be done.' … Just saying it over and over will often enable us to clear a channel choked up with anger, fear, frustration, or misunderstanding, and permit us to return to the surest help of all – our search for God* [of our understanding]*'s will, not our own, in the moment of stress*. *12&12*, 103: 0]

2.) ***Conscious contact***

- The Big Book authors speak of the ***Retire at night*** **meditation / prayer** (86:1): *…Review our day. Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest, or afraid*?
- *Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time? … After making our review we ask God* [of our understanding]*'s forgiveness and inquire, what corrective measures should be taken*? (86: 1)

- There also is the ***On awakening*** **meditation / prayer** (86: 2, 3 - 87: 0, 1, 2): *We ask God* [of our understanding] *to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking* ***motives***. (86: 2)
- *We ask for freedom from self-will….* (87: 1)
- *Be quick to see where religious people are right*. (87: 2)

- And, there is the ***Through the day*** **meditation / prayer** (87: 3 - 88: 0): *…We* ***pause****, when agitated or doubtful, and* ***ask*** *for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day 'Thy will be done.*' (87: 3 - 88: 0)

3.) ***The power to carry that out.***

- Why do we pray only for *knowledge* of God's will for us and *the power to carry that out*? (59: 2)
- How does humility apply to this?

III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 11 PRINCIPLES

- How may I clear away my insistence that I want or I need something, and let things be?
- How may I remember that I am not in charge of the world?
- How may I have the faith and courage to seek the knowledge, the will and the power to live my life in a way that brings serenity and peace of mind?
- How may I pass on to others my inner knowing of creation's deep wish of well being for me and others?
- How may I make a commitment to the practice of regular meditation and prayer?
- Have I meditated and prayed today?

* *

IV TAKE STEP 11 ON A DAILY BASIS.

We take Step 11 in the first three paragraphs on BB page 86.
We ask God [of our understanding]…. (86: 1, 2, 3)

According to the Big Book and under the conditions of this day, we practice Step 11 on a daily basis. Take Step 11 in the manner that you and your group see fit. Some recite the Step or read an 11th Step prayer.

SESSION 20

STEP 12 Working With Others pp. 89 - 103

Step 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

***…Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery.* (97: 1)**

…Trust in God and clean house…. (98: 2)

Take Step 12

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** We read Chapter 7, Working With Others. Many will read Step 12 in the *12&12*.

- **WRITE** We write our daily reflections. We continue making our Step 9 amends. We do Step 10 spot-check inventories, and we may work at annual or semi-annual inventories of all Steps. We practice Step 11 meditation / prayer.

- **TALK** We talk with our sponsor and new comers. We carry the message.
  - Heard in a meeting: "The *message* of Step 12 is not 'You should get sober,' but rather '*Having had a spiritual awakening as **the** result of these Steps*…." (60: 0)
  - Heard in a meeting: "We carry the message; we cannot carry the drunk."

- **PRACTICE DAILY PRAYER / MEDITATION.** We practice Step 11 conscious contact with the higher power of our understanding on a daily basis.

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 12?

We may read and discuss Chapter 7, Working With Others. One or more members of the group might share their experiences with Step 12 of the Big Book.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Read BB Chapter 7. See pp. 109-110 this workbook.)

1.) *Spiritual awakening as the result*

- What is my overall experience as a result of working the Steps?
- By doing my own work in Steps 1 through 11, have I developed a new way of thinking, feeling and acting, and connecting with others?
- Is it my experience that I have undergone *a profound alteration in* [my] *reaction to life*? (567: 4)
- Have I had a *personality change sufficient to bring about recovery*? (567: 1)
- What lasting changes have resulted from my spiritual awakening?
- Having awakened to the reality that I too am a good and caring person, can I invite others to see themselves the way that a loving higher power might see them, rather than from their own distorted or antagonistic outlook?

2.) ***Carry <u>this</u> message***

- What is *this message* that is referred to in Step 12? (60: 0) (See also 17: 3; 45: 2; 77: 0; 89: 1.)
- In my experience, does this message include that there is hope, we are not alone, we can stay sober, and we can recover?
- Did someone carry the message to me? (See p. 18: 4,5)
- Why was an AA member able to reach me in a way that no one else ever had?
- What kind of service work am I doing today to carry the message?
- What are the step-by-step requirements for Twelfth Step work? (See BB Chapter 7, and this SbBB workbook pp. 109 - 110)
- May I share who I am, where I have come from, and how it is for me now?

3.) ***Practice <u>these</u> principles***

- What does it mean to me to *practice*? (60: 0) Does it mean 'to keep trying'?
- What does it mean to practice *these principles* (60: 0) in all my affairs?
- Do I find life offering opportunities to repeatedly experience my old shortcomings, my old patterns, my old behaviors, my old actor's roles (60: 4), my old thought-habits and my old motives (86: 2), but each time with new understanding?

III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 12 PRINCIPLES

- How may I deeply wish that others, including myself, may be happy, joyous, and free?
- How may I understand that sometimes the best way of loving and helping is to stop enabling someone else to drink?
- What is my attitude about sponsorship? What is my attitude about service?
- How may I practice spiritual principles, such as compassion, regardless of how I feel?
- If my disease is often expressed as self-centeredness, how may I express my recovery as selfless service?

* *

IV WORK STEP 12 ON A DAILY BASIS

We take Step 12 in the first paragraph on BB page 89.

A group reading of the last portion of Chapter 11, A Vision for You, is a fitting way to end these Steps by the Big Book group sessions. (164: 2, 3, 4)

[Heard in a meeting: "If you want to be happy, serve others."

- "How may we alcoholics live ***happy***, ***joyous***, *and* ***free****?* (133: 0)
  - "**Happiness** is being free of suffering – free of our mind's tortured reactions to the things that may hurt or frighten us.
  - "**Joy** is taking grateful delight in another's happiness, including our own.
  - "**Freedom** is the reprieve from grasping onto our self-centered alcoholism/addiction, our self-absorption, just for today."]

STEP 12 *PASS THIS ON* (94: 1) PRINCIPLES FROM THE BIG BOOK

***…When all other measures failed, work with another alcoholic would save the day*. (Bill's Story, 15: 1)**

This is our twelfth suggestion: Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. (89: 1)

. . .

- *When you discover a prospect for Alcoholics Anonymous, find out all you can about him*. (90: 1)
- *Realizing* [you] *are dealing with a sick person. … Put yourself in his place*. (90: 1,2) *So cooperate; never criticize.* (89: 3)
- *Don't deal with him when he is very drunk....* (90: 3)
- *If he does not want to see you, never force yourself upon him.* (90: 4)
- *You might place this book where he can see it in the interval.* (90: 4)
- *See your man alone* [*without…family*], *if possible*. (91: 3)

. . .

- *Tell him enough about your drinking habits, symptoms, and experiences to encourage him to speak of himself. If he wishes to talk, let him do so.* (91: 3)
- *…Give him a sketch of your drinking career up to the time you quit. But say nothing, for the moment, of how that was accomplished*. (91: 3)
- *When he sees you know all about the drinking game, commence to describe yourself as an alcoholic*. (91: 4)
- *Give him an account of the struggles you made to stop*. (92: 0)
- *Show him the mental twist which leads to the first drink of a spree*. (92: 0)

. . .

- *And be careful not to brand him as an alcoholic*. (92: 1)
- *If he sticks to the idea that he can still control his drinking, tell him that possibly he can - if he is not too alcoholic. But insist that if he is severely afflicted, there may be little chance he can recover by himself*. (92: 1)
- *Continue to speak of alcoholism as an illness, a fatal malady*. (92: 2)
- *Talk about the conditions of body and mind which accompany it.* (92: 2)
- *Even though your protégé may not have entirely admitted his condition, he has become very curious to know how you got well. Let him ask you that question, if he will.* (92: 2-93: 0)

. . .

- *Tell him exactly what happened to you*. (93: 0)
- *... Make it emphatic that he does not have to agree with your conception of God. He can choose any conception he likes, provided it makes sense to him.* (93: 0)
- *Let him see that you are not there to instruct him in religion*. (93: 2)
- *Outline the program of action....* (94: 1)
- *Make it plain he is under no obligation to...see you again if he doesn't want to*. (94: 1)

. . .

- *Your candidate may give reasons why he need not follow all of the program. ... Do not contradict such views*. (94: 2)
- *On your first visit tell him about the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. If he shows interest, lend him your copy of this book.* (94: 2)
- *...Do not wear out your welcome. Give him a chance to think it over*. (95: 1)
- *...You will be most successful with alcoholics if you do not exhibit any passion for crusade or reform*. (95: 1)
- *Never talk down to an alcoholic from any moral or spiritual hilltop; simply lay out the kit of spiritual tools for his inspection*. (95: 1)

. . .

- *Show him how they* [the Steps] *worked with you*. (95: 1)
- *Offer him friendship and fellowship*. (95: 1)
- *Tell him that if he wants to get well you will do anything to help*. (95: 1)
- *...If he expects you to act only as a banker...or a nurse for his sprees, you may have to drop him....* (95: 2)
- *If he is sincerely interested and wants to see you again, ask him to read this book in the interval*. (95: 3)
- *If he thinks he can do the job in some other way...encourage him to follow his own conscience*. (95: 4)

. . .

- *Suppose now you are making your second visit to a man. He has read this volume and says he is prepared to go through with the Twelve Steps of the program of recovery. Having had the experience yourself, you can give him much practical advice*. (96: 2)
- *Though an alcoholic does not respond, there is no reason why you should neglect his family. ... The family should be offered your way of life*. (97: 3)
- *The minute we put our work on a 'service' plane, the alcoholic commences to rely on our assistance…claiming he cannot master alcohol until his material needs are cared for. Nonsense.* (98: 1)
- *Burn the idea into the consciousness of every man that he can get well regardless of anyone*. (98: 2)
- *When working with a man and his family, you should take care not to participate in their quarrels*. (100: 2)
- *We are careful never to show intolerance or hatred of drinking as an institution*. (103: 1)

. . .

- ***Be sober, considerate, and helpful, regardless of what anyone says or does***. (99: 1)

We may read Chapter 8, To Wives; Chapter 9, The Family Afterwards; Chapter 10, To Employers and Chapter 11, A Vision for You. These chapters teach us how to practice the Twelve Step principles in all our affairs.

Some of us may immediately begin working through the Steps again with the perspective that we have gained from our journey thus far.

SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF STEPS BY THE BIG BOOK

[Direct quotes from Big Book and *12&12*. Compile your own!]

A.) "…**the drink problem…"** (17: 1)

B.) "…a common solution…" (17: 3)

C.) "…a practical program of action…" (9: 6)

A.) The Problem: "…We were full of fear…" (52: 2)

Step One [Honesty]

- ✓ "...Alcoholism as an illness, a fatal malady." (92: 2)

- ✓ "If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely [mental obsession], or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take [physical compulsion], you are probably alcoholic." (44: 1)
  - [Mental:] "They are restless, irritable and discontented, unless they can again experience the sense [mental obsession] of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks…." (xxviii: 4)
  - [Physical:] "After they have succumbed to the desire again, as so many do [they pick up a drink], and the phenomenon of craving [physical compulsion] develops, they pass through the well-known stages of a spree, emerging remorseful, with a firm resolution not to drink again. This is repeated over and over…." (xxix: 0)

- ✓ "…The main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind [mental obsession], rather than in his body [physical compulsion]." (23: 1)
  - "Was I crazy? I began to wonder, for such an appalling lack of perspective seemed near being just that." (5: 5)
  - "The alcoholics under investigation were still childish, emotionally sensitive, and grandiose." [*12&12*, 123: 0]
  - "We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were a prey to misery and depression, we couldn't make a living, we had a feeling of uselessness, we were full of fear, we were unhappy, we couldn't seem to be of real help to other people…."(52: 2)

B.) The <u>Solution</u>: "…**Quit playing God**." (62: 3)

Step Two [Hope]

- ✓ "Burn the idea into the consciousness of every man that he **<u>can get well</u>** regardless of anyone." (98: 2)

- ✓ "… You may be suffering from an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer." (44: 1)
  - "…Unless this person can experience an entire psychic change there is very little hope of his recovery." (xxix: 0)
  - "They appear to be in the nature of huge emotional displacements and rearrangements." (27: 4)

- ✓ "…The personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism…." (567: 1)
  - "(Dr. Jung) Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them." (26: 1; 27: 4)
  - "Most of our experiences are what the psychologist William James calls the 'educational variety' because they develop slowly over a period of time." (567: 4)

- ✓ "With few exceptions our members find that they have tapped an unsuspected inner resource which they presently identify with their own conception of a Power greater than themselves." (567: 4)
- ✓ "Most of us think this awareness of a Power greater than ourselves is the essence of spiritual experience. Our more religious members call it 'God-consciousness.'" (568: 0)
  - "First of all, we had to <u>quit playing God. It didn't work</u>." (62: 3)
  - "When, therefore, we speak to you of God, we mean your own conception of God. This applies, too, to other spiritual expressions which you find in this book. Do not let any prejudice you may have against spiritual terms deter you from honestly asking yourself what they mean to you." (47: 1)

- ✓ "We find that no one need have difficulty with the spirituality of the program. Willingness, honesty and open mindedness are the essentials of recovery. But these are indispensable." (568: 3)
  - "To us, the Realm of the Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe, to all…." (46: 2)
  - "… [The] main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem." (45: 2)

SUMMARY

C.) The <u>Program of Action</u>: "... **We pause**…**and ask**...." (87: 3)

Step Three and Beyond [Trust]

- ✓ "It meant <u>destruction of self-centeredness</u>." (14: 1)

- ✓ "…The only effort necessary being that required to follow a few simple rules." (xxix: 1)
    - "Almost none of us liked the self-searching, the leveling of our pride, the confession of shortcomings which the process requires for its successful consummation. But we saw that it really worked in others…." (25: 1)
    - "Selfishness - self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles. (62: 1)
    - "So <u>our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making</u>. They arise out of ourselves, and the alcoholic is an extreme example of self-will run riot, though he usually doesn't think so. Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us!" (62: 2)
    - "He is the Principal; we are His agents." (62: 3)

- ✓ **STEP 4** [Courage] "Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action…a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, <u>the things in ourselves which had been blocking us [from higher power]</u>. Our liquor was but a symptom. So we had to get down to causes and conditions." (63: 4)
    - "Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened?" (67: 2) "...Dishonest or self-seeking <u>motives</u>." (86: 2)
    - "We admitted our wrongs honestly and were willing to set these matters straight." (67: 2)
    - "If you have already made a decision [Step 3], and an inventory of your grosser handicaps [Step 4], you have made a good beginning." (71: 0)
    - "When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically." (64: 3)

- ✓ **STEP 5** [Integrity] "We usually find a solitary self-appraisal insufficient." (72: 2)
    - "…They told someone else all their life story." (73: 0)
    - "<u>We have a written inventory and we are prepared for a long talk</u>." (75: 1)
    - "We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past. Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye." (75: 2)

SUMMARY

- ✓ **STEP 6** [Willingness] "…Let go…." (76: 1)

- ✓ **STEP 7** [Humility] "…Let God…." (76: 1)

- ✓ **STEP 8** [Compassion] "We have a list of all persons we have harmed [Step 4] and to whom we are willing to make amends. We made it when we took inventory. We subjected ourselves to a drastic self-appraisal." (76: 3)

- ✓ **STEP 9** [Justice] "Now we need more action, without which we find that 'Faith without works is dead.' … Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past." (76: 3)
  - "If we are painstaking ... Self-seeking will slip away.... Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. ... If we work for them." (83: 4)

- ✓ **STEP 10** [Perseverance] "Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear. When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them. We discuss them with someone immediately and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others is our code." (84: 2)

- ✓ **STEP 11** [Spiritual awareness] "… Let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. …We ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives." (86: 2)
  - "... We pause…and ask..." (87: 3)
  - "…Humbly saying to ourselves many times each day 'Thy will be done.'" (88: 0)

- ✓ **STEP 12** [Service] "…Nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. This is our twelfth suggestion: Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. … Remember they are very ill." (89: 1)
  - "The main thing is that he be willing to believe in a Power greater than himself and that he live by spiritual principles." (93: 0)
  - "…Trust in God [Steps 1 – 3] and clean house [Steps 4 – 8 & 9 – 10 – 11]." (98: 2)
  - "Helping others [Step 12]…." (97: 1)
  - "…Be sober, considerate, and helpful, regardless of what anyone says or does." (99: 1)

Steps by the Big Book

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