

4th Step inventory using The 4 Absolutes

The 4th Step is not meant to be an in-depth psychoanalysis of ourselves; rather it is asking God to awaken us to seeing where our lives have been out of alignment with His will for us.

Fourth Step Reminder: You are no longer trying to work these steps on your own! Write a prayer like this at the top of every page of your inventory.

“God, please help me to be honest, help me to remember, and give me the courage to complete this inventory.”

HONEST: Is it true or is it false?)

- How have I been dishonest with others and with myself?
- Have I lied, manipulated, cheated and stolen from others? List the big ones.
- Who was hurt by my dishonesty?
- How did this hurt my relationship with God, remembering that God is Truth?

UNSELFISHNESS: How will it affect others?

- How has self-centeredness shown itself in my life and who has been hurt by it?
- Are there people, institutions or principles that still anger me?
- If so, is there a role I played either bringing it about or holding on to my resentment?
- How have I put my own self-interest ahead of God’s plan for me to be of service to others?

PURITY: Is it right or is it wrong?

- What past or present behaviors, thoughts or feelings make me feel guilty, isolated, or ashamed?
- What are the areas of my life that I don’t want others to see?
- Remembering that my sex powers are God given and good, where has my sex life strayed from what I believe God’s will is for me?
- How has fear dominated my life?
- Who or what am I afraid of? Why?
- What have I done to cover my fear?
- How have I responded negatively or destructively to my fear?
- What do I most fear looking at and exposing about myself?
- What do I think will happen if I do?
- How have I cheated myself because of my fear?

LOVE: Is it ugly or is it beautiful?

- How was I self-seeking?
- What did I do in pursuit of my selfish desires?
- Did I manipulate people?
- When my ego was hurt, how did I act out in response?
- Did I slander or gossip?
- Justified or not, what harms did I cause, and what self-serving behaviors did I engage in?
- Has my life been isolated – a lonely life of “taking” rather than “giving”?
- Now, with God’s help, am I ready make “love and service” my code?

Based on a Simple (but not easy) step 4 guide by Fr. Bill W. Send comments to:
RevBillW@gmail.com.

4th Step inventory using The 4 Absolutes

Considerations: The Big Book concludes the inventory section by saying: *“If you have already made a decision, (Step 3) and an inventory of your grosser handicaps (Step 4), you have made a good beginning. That being so, you have swallowed and digested some big chunks of truth about yourself.”*

Now ask yourself the following question:

Have I knowingly omitted writing down anything I have done or left undone that makes me feel guilty, ashamed or separated from God, from people, or from myself?

If your answer is an honest, “NO!” then get on to Step 5 as fast as you can; for, the Big Book promises:

“Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator. We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual experience. The feeling that the drink problem has disappeared will often come strongly. We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe.”

Dr. Bob left his blessing on the Four Absolutes to help us find our way back to God whenever we get lost. He also left a warning to his fellow co-founder, “Bill, let’s not louse this thing up. Let’s keep it simple.” (DR. BOB and the Good Oldtimers, p. 343). .