

Step 4 Inventory

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

God, please help me face and be rid of the things in myself which have been blocking me from You, other people and myself.

Instructions: Read and highlight:

1. Resentment BB pp 63:4-67
2. Fear BB pp 67-68
3. Sex BB pp 68-71
4. Step 4 in the 12 & 12 (AA, OA, NA your choice)
5. Directions for taking this Step are given throughout. The results of taking Step 4 are given on page 70:3.

Principle	Theme	Action	Defect	Result
Courage, Truth, Honesty	Know self	Self-examination	Selfishness, self-seeking, dishonesty, fear, resentment	Insight, new perspective on self(humility), responsibility

Purpose	Process	Experience	Result	Promise
Identify the obstacles that block us from Power	Analyze behavior and identify our real motives	1. We are delusional; we're not who we think we are. 2.All our troubles are of our own making 3.We can't see and accept the truth on our own power	Take responsibility for perceptions, feeling, reactions, and behavior. Pray and hold ourselves accountable.	Removal of the obstacles blocking us from God.

In the fourth step, by doing our inventories, we are looking for the "truth" which has built the patterns of thinking and behavior in our life up to today. It will be uncomfortable to look at what our version of the "truth" is. But, until we bring it up to the conscious level and inspect it -- we do not know what to keep and what to discard.

The purpose of this worksheet is to prepare us for this step. When we understand this step and why it must be done, our attitude can be one of positive expectation rather than of fear and panic.

Step 4 Principle is Courage: This step is really about courage to honestly (see step 1) look at ourselves. Take a look at how our behavior has become warped to justify our continued behavior. We are here to take an honest assessment of ourselves.

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.”

Fourth Step Promises:

1. You have a have a new foundation.
2. You trust and depend on God.
3. You trust an unlimited God rather than your limited self.
4. You are in the world to play the part that God gives you.
5. You do what you think God would have you do.
6. You humbly rely on God to handle the results.
7. And when you do this, God will enable you to meet misfortune with peace of mind.
8. As soon as you ask God to remove a fear and direct your attention to a better way, you will begin to outgrow fear.
9. You have started to learn kindness and compassion for others, even those who have wronged you. You recognize the Spiritual Illness in others because you recognize it in yourself.
10. God can remove all of your defects of character. Then, you will be able to see God.
11. When you are spiritually healed, you also heal mentally and physically.

Warning:

1. If you have not been thorough and honest, this step will not work.
2. If you continue to experience resentment, you life will be unhappy and ineffective.

The Fourth Step Paradox – The more you depend on God, the more independent you become.

Prayer and the 4th step:

Step 4 Prayers: There are several prayers attached to the 4th step:

There are various fourth step prayers. Before we write inventory, please pray from one of the following prayers:

Forth Step Prayer – When someone upsets you:

1. Ask God for the willingness to respect them.
2. Ask God to help you be compassionate.
3. Ask God for patience.
4. Recognize their spiritual illness
5. Ask God to show you how you can help.
6. Ask God to direct your thinking.
7. Ask God to control the outcome.

Dear God, Please help me. Lord, please remove my anger, resentments and fear. Please replace them With Gratitude for what I do have, Patience in knowing that You have a plan for my life, Faithfulness in the fact that You love me and want the best for me and Trust in You, that you will always provide what I need If I keep close to you and perform your works well. Help me to be honest with my family and to let them know what has happened today so that as a loving family we may get through this crisis with the least damage. And Father, help me to be a Good Steward of the gifts You have already given me. Amen.

God, please give me an intuitive thought or decision to help me with this problem. Help me know what I should do and keep me mindful, that You are running the show. Free me from my bondage of self. Thy will be done always. Amen." (From the thoughts on pg. 86)

"God, please help me show those I resent the same Tolerance, Pity and Patience that I would cheerfully grant a sick friend. Help me to see that this is a sick man. Father, please show me how I can be helpful to him and save me from being angry. Lord, help me to avoid retaliation or argument. I know I can't be helpful to all people, but at least show me how to take a kindly and tolerant view of each and every one. Thy will be done."(67:0)

WHEN IN DOUBT

"I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me. Never was I to pray for myself, except as my requests bore on my usefulness to others. Then only might I expect to receive. But that would be in great measure." (p.13)

WHEN I AM DISTURBED BY THE CONDUCT (SYMPTOMS) OF OTHERS:

"This is a sick man like myself. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done." (p. 67 BB)

God help me to show this person the same tolerance, pity and patience that I would cheerfully grant a sick friend. This is a sick person, how can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done. (see above and p. 141 of 12&12)

For every resentment say: 'God, help me show tolerance, sympathy, and patience to _____. Help me recognize their suffering. Show me how can I be helpful. Save me for being angry. They will be done?'

WHEN I AM AFRAID

"We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be." (p. 68 BB)

God, relieve me of this fear and direct my attention to what you would have me be. AMEN (see above)

WHEN I AM AWARE OF MY OWN DEFECTS AND SEEKING GOD'S HELP TO CHANGE

"We asked God to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them. . . we ask God what we should do about each specific matter." (p. 69 BB)

God mold my ideals in this particular area of my life and help me to live up to them. What should I do in each specific matter? Guide me God and give me strength to do right. AMEN (see above)

Honestly pray the 4th step prayer – God, help me show _____, the same tolerance, pity, and patience that I would cheerfully grant a sick friend. _____ is a sick man/woman, how can I be helpful to him/her? Save me from being angry. Thy will be done. From this point forward we try to avoid retaliation or argument.

Questions:

Why is prayer important when writing out a 4th step inventory? How does prayer help you recover?

What is the purpose of prayer?

Why does one need to pray?

Written Inventory Ideas and Thoughts:

Have you studied pages 63-71 of the Big Book with your sponsor? (Or equivalent material if you are working the Steps from the standpoint of another addiction?)

Have you completed your 3rd Step?

Having agreed to turn your will and life over to the care of God?

Do you understand that God's will for you is to complete the 4th Step and then continue with the rest?

Are you commencing this step in a FEARLESS or a FEARFUL way? And where does your Higher Power stand in relation to that?

What are your feelings about doing a fourth step?

Does completing a fearless search of yourself give rise to a sense of anxiety, excitement or freedom?

Bonus questions for those who have done a 4th step:

- Were you afraid of doing a 4th step? If so, when you were done, had your fears come true?
- What Spiritual Awakening did you have as a result of this step?

How can you get the willingness to start on my Step 4? What are you willing to commit to for today? (Even 5 minutes of writing is enough – use a timer!)

How will I write my inventory? Which format will I use?

Ask a sponsor or friend to share with you how they did theirs. It doesn't have to be perfect. There are several formats that will be discussed with the group. Pick a format that works best for you right now.

Examination of the 4th step:

Write down your definition of each word in the step. Then look up each word individually in the dictionary and write down what you've learned about the difference between what you thought it meant and what the dictionary says it means.

Write down what each part means to you:

We made

A searching and fearless

What does it mean to me to do a SEARCHING inventory?

What does it mean to me to do a FEARLESS inventory?

We know what these words mean individually, but, what do they mean when combined?

Moral inventory

What does the word "moral" mean?

What is an inventory?

Why is step four compared to a business inventory?

What is a moral inventory?

Of Ourselves

What is a moral inventory of ourselves?

Does the meaning change when the words are combined and not considered individually? What quality of character must be used when taking an inventory?

Do I need to list my character assets as well as my moral shortcomings (defects)? If so, why or why not?

How could you construct a moral inventory (not what is in it)?

Define the following words:

resentment, self-seeking, selfish, dishonesty, fear, self-esteem, pocket book, ambition, security, personal relations, sex/gender relations, harm, sex, jealousy, bitterness, inconsideration, suspicion, self-reliance, ego, pride, defect character, nature, expectations, realizations, responsibility, amends, delusion and forgiveness.

If applicable, what is the opposite of each word/concept?

General Questions:

What is the purpose of doing step four inventory?

Why is the fourth step not a history, a confession or a judgment?

Why is the step four inventory about what we are not?

If you have been through about your personal inventory, what will you achieve?

What are causes and conditions?

What is fact-finding?

What is fact-facing?

Have I come to believe that I need to do a personal inventory of my strengths and weaknesses?

Have I overcome the denial and excuses that blocked me from completing this inventory?

Have I selected a knowledgeable and experienced person to assist in the inventory process?

What is the root of our troubles?

What are the three manifestations of self-will?

What is our spiritual malady?

What is the connection between our mental obsession, physical allergy and our spiritual malady?

Why do we need to do a harms, fear, resentment and sex inventory? What are the differences between them? What do we learn from each separate inventory?

Why do we want to be free of resentments? How can we achieve this?

Is it important to see your part in the resentment? Why or why not?

Are my problems of my own making? If so, how?

What is the exact nature of our wrongs?

Is it possible to eliminate fear? Do we make a conscious decision to feel afraid?

What is self-reliance?

Why do we need to do an ideal for our future sex life?

What will we achieve by writing our sex ideal?

Why do I need to make amends when I have harmed someone?

How do our motives affect our conduct in recovery?

If I am trying to make myself un-self-centered, isn't that still being self-centered?

Outcome:

Have I begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even my enemies?

Am I able to look upon them as sick people?

What did faith do for me that I could not do for myself?

Is self-knowledge useful?

Are you responsible for your past?

What are you responsible for?

Will abstinence and working the program make my life better?

Is it possible that lack of willingness to move forward in the steps has anything to do with whether you go back to drinking again or not?

Practicing the principles of step 4:

Change your Mind

- Recognize that YOU choose your thoughts
- If your thoughts are making you unhappy, change them
- Believing is Seeing
- Shift away from negative thoughts instantly

How to write our Relationship Ideal:

Prayer: We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity and the strength to do the right thing.

Ask God to help you recreate your relationships. Perform the following steps on each relationship:

1. Think about and carefully consider what you have written. Meditate on the relationship
2. Pray. Ask God to mold your ideals for this relationship. Ask God what you should do.
3. Write a two-part prayer for this relationship.
 - a. State your ultimate objectives for your own behavior in this relationship.
 - b. Ask God to help you live up to these objectives. Ask God to give you the guidance, sanity, and strength to do the right thing.

Repeat this process for each relationship.

The ideal usually includes 3 aspects of a relationship:

1. Ideal attributes and behaviors in ourselves that we would like to bring to a relationship.
2. If you are NOT currently in a relationship, include ideal attributes and behaviors that we would look for in SOMEONE ELSE that we might consider having a relationship with. But, if you ARE currently in a relationship, include positive attributes and behaviors that your partner already has that you can appreciate and notice more.
3. Attributes and behaviors that would describe what an ideal relationship would generally look like.