

Uncovering and Discovering our Old Ideas

“Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.” – Big Book page 58

It has been my experience through the years that the more efficient I become at uncovering my old ways of thinking and acting and the more willing I am to take action to overcome their negative influence in my life, the more effective I have become in living life as a useful, productive member of society – guided by an entirely new set of beliefs and principles. To begin uncovering and discovering old ideas, simply draw four columns on a separate sheet of paper and follow the directions below.

Column 1 – Who or What (is this IDEA about)?

List the name of the person, institution, principle of life or thing about which you wish to uncover, discover, and discard an old idea and replace it with a new idea in which to live.

Column 2 – What IS my old idea (problem)?

Here we list the THOUGHT, FEELING, BELIEF, JUDGMENT or ATTITUDE we are holding on to toward this person, institution, principle of life or thing which is interfering with and/or threatening our relations with God, ourselves, another human being and/or society as a whole. List all that apply in column 2. THEN, write in from where you believe you came by this old idea in the first place.

Column 3 – What elements of self (“affects my”) are being hurt, threatened or interfered with?

Is it our self-esteem (fear); our personal, physical, financial, sexual or social relations?

Is it our sense of security, survival or ambitions (power)?

Am I feeling angry, hurt, resentful, afraid, guilty or ashamed in relation to this idea?

Am I acting or feeling...ISOLATED, WITHDRAWN, SET APART, SOLITARY or DISUNITED in relation to this old idea?

List all that apply in column 3.

Column 4 – What’s my new idea (solution)?

Here we list a NEW IDEA we can implement and TAKE ACTION on in an effort to replace the old idea injurious to ourselves and others. THEN, list a SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE (see list below), which may aid in adopting this new idea. THEN, discuss this list of old ideas with YOUR SPONSOR or trusted friend EXPERIENCED IN THIS PROCESS.

Twelve Spiritual Principles

“To be doomed to an alcoholic death or to live on a spiritual basis are not always easy alternatives to face.” – Big Book page 44

Honesty	Fairness and straightforwardness of conduct; adherence to the facts and truth.
Hope	To expect with desire; something on which hopes are centered.
Faith	Complete confidence, belief, trust AND gratitude.
Courage	Firmness of mind AND will in the face of extreme difficulty; mental or moral strength to withstand fear.
Integrity	The quality or state of being complete or undivided; soundness.
Willingness	Prompt to act or respond; accepted and done of choice or without reluctance.
Humility	Not proud or haughty; not arrogant or assertive; a clear and concise understanding of what we are, followed by a sincere desire to become what we can be.
Love	Unselfish concern that freely accepts another in loyalty and seeks his good; to hold dear; to extend benevolence; forgiveness.
Patience	Having PERSEVERANCE; steadfast despite opposition, difficulty or adversity; able or willing to bear; to persist in an undertaking in spite of counter influences.
Awareness	Alive and alert; vigilance in observing.
Discipline	Training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character; to bring under control; to train or develop by instruction.
Service	A helpful act; contribution to the welfare of others; useful labor that does not produce a tangible commodity.

Wayne B.