

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO STEP TEN  
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## STEP TEN

*“Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.”*

**Big Book**, pg. 84 – They (the promises of Step Nine) will always materialize if we work for them.

This thought brings us to *Step Ten*, which suggests we continue to take personal inventory (Step 4) and continue to set right any new mistakes as we go along. (Step 9) We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past. We have entered the world of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness. This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime. Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear. (Step 4) When these crop up, we ask G-D at once to remove them. (Steps 6 and 7) We discuss them with someone immediately (Step 5) and make amends quickly (Steps 8 and 9) if we have harmed anyone. Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. (Step 12) Love and tolerance of others is our code.

And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone—even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned. We will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame. We react sanely and normally, and we will find that this has happened automatically. We will see that our new attitude toward liquor has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! That is the miracle of it. We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation. We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality—safe and protected. We have not even sworn off. Instead the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky nor are we afraid. That is our experience. That is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition.

It is easy to let up on the spiritual program of action and rest on our laurels. We are headed for trouble if we do, for alcohol is a subtle foe. We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition. Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of G-D’s will into all of our activities. “How can I best serve Thee—Thy will (not mine) be done.” (Step 3) These are thoughts which must go with us constantly. We can exercise our will power along this line all we wish. It is the proper use of the will.

## **AA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions**

As we work the first nine Steps, we prepare ourselves for the adventure of a new life. But when we approach Step Ten we commence to put our A.A. way of living to practical use, day by day in fair weather or foul. Then comes the acid test: can we stay sober, keep in emotional balance, and live to good purpose under all conditions?

A continuous look at our assets and liabilities, and a real desire to learn and grow by this means, are necessities for experienced people, or course, in all times and places have practiced unsparing self-survey and criticism. For the wise have always known that no one can make much of his life until self-searching becomes a regular habit, until he is able to admit and accept what he finds, and until he patiently and persistently tries to correct what is wrong.

When a drunk has a terrific hangover because he drank heavily yesterday, he cannot live well today. But there is another kind of handover which we all experience whether we are drinking or not. That is the emotional hangover, the direct result of yesterday's and sometimes today's excesses of negative emotion - anger, fear, jealousy, and the like. If we would live serenely today and tomorrow, we certainly need to eliminate these hangovers. This doesn't mean we need to wander morbidly around in the past. It requires an admission and correction of errors *now*. Our inventory enables us to settle with the past. When this is done, we are really able to leave it behind us. When our inventory is carefully taken, and we have made peace with ourselves, the conviction follows that tomorrow's challenges can be met as they come.

Although all inventories are alike in principle, the time factor does distinguish one from another. There's the spot-check inventory, (1) taken at any time of the day, whenever we find ourselves getting tangled up. There's the one we take at day's end, (2) when we review the happenings of the hours just past. Here we cast up a balance sheet, crediting ourselves with things well done, and chalking up debits where due. Then there are those occasions when alone, or in the company of our sponsor or spiritual adviser, we make a careful review of our progress since the last time. (3) Many A.A.'s go in for annual or semiannual housecleanings. (4) Many of us also like the experience of an occasional retreat from the outside world where we can quiet down for an undisturbed day or so of self-overhaul and meditation. (5)

Aren't these practices joy-killers as well as time-consumers? Must A.A.'s spend most of their waking hours drearily rehashing their sins of omission or

commission? Well, hardly. The emphasis on inventory is heavy only because a great many of us have never really acquired the habit of accurate self-appraisal. Once this healthy practice has become grooved, it will be so interesting and profitable that the time it takes won't be missed. For these minutes and sometimes hours spent in self-examination are bound to make all the other hours of our day better and happier. And at length our inventories become a regular part of everyday living, rather than something unusual or set apart.

Before we ask what a spot-check inventory is, let's look at the kind of setting in which such an inventory can do its work.

It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with *us*. If somebody hurts us and we are sore, we are in the wrong also. But are there no exceptions to this rule? What about "justifiable" anger? Can't we be properly angry with self-righteous folk? For us of A.A. these are dangerous exceptions. We have found that justified anger ought to be left to those better qualified to handle it.

Few people have been more victimized by resentments than have we alcoholics. It mattered little whether our resentments were justified or not. A burst of temper could spoil a day, and a well-nursed grudge could make us miserably ineffective. Nor were we ever skillful in separating justified from unjustified anger. As we saw it, our wrath was always justified. Anger, that occasional luxury of more balanced people, could keep us on an emotional jag indefinitely. These emotional "dry benders" often led straight to the bottle. Other kinds of disturbances-jealousy, envy, self-pity, or hurt pride-did the same thing.

A spot-check inventory taken in the midst of such disturbances can be of very great help in quieting stormy emotions. Today's spot check finds its chief application to situations which arise in each day's march. The consideration of long-standing difficulties had better be postponed, when possible, to times deliberately set aside for that purpose. The quick inventory is aimed at our daily ups and downs, especially those where people or new events throw us off balance and tempt us to make mistakes.

In all these situations we need self-restraint, (pause) honest analysis of what is involved, a willingness to admit when the fault is ours, and an equal willingness to forgive when the fault is elsewhere. We need not be discouraged when we fall into the error of our old ways, for these disciplines are not easy. We shall look for (spiritual) progress, not for perfection.

Our first objective will be the development of self-restraint. (pause) This carries a top priority rating. When we speak or act hastily or rashly, the ability to be fair-minded and tolerant evaporates on the spot. One unkind tirade or one willful snap judgment can ruin our relation with another person for a whole day, or maybe a whole year. Nothing pays off like restraint of tongue and pen. (and email and text) We must avoid quick-tempered criticism and furious, power-driven argument. The same goes for sulking or silent scorn. These are emotional booby traps baited with pride and vengefulness. Our first job is to sidestep the traps. When we are tempted by the bait, we should train ourselves to step back and think. (pause) For we can neither think nor act to good purpose until the habit of self-restraint has become automatic.

Disagreeable or unexpected problems are not the only ones that call for self-control. We must be quite as careful when we begin to achieve some measure of importance and material success. For no people have loved personal triumphs more than we have loved them; we drank of success as a wine which could never fail to make us feel elated. When temporary good fortune came our way, we indulged ourselves in fantasies of still greater victories over people and circumstances. Thus blinded by prideful self-confidence, we were apt to play the big shot. Of course, people turned away from us, bored or hurt.

Now that we're in A.A. and sober, and winning back the esteem of our friends and business associates, we find that we still need to exercise special vigilance. As an insurance against "big-shot-ism" we can often check ourselves by remembering that we are today sober only by the grace of G-D and any success we may be having is far more His Success than ours. (humility)

Finally, we begin to see that all people, including ourselves, are to some extent emotionally ill as well as frequently wrong, and then we approach true tolerance and see what real love for our fellows actually means. It will become more and more evident as we go forward that it is pointless to become angry, or to get hurt by people who, like us, are suffering from the pains of growing up. (humility)

Such a radical change in our outlook will take time, maybe a lot of time. Not many people can truthfully assert that they love everybody. Most of us must admit that we have loved but a few; that we have been quite indifferent to the many so long as none of them gave us trouble; and as for the remainder—well, we have really disliked or hated them. Although these attitudes are common enough, we A.A.'s find we need something much better in order to keep our

balance. We can't stand it if we hate deeply. The idea that we can be possessively loving of a few, can ignore the many, and can continue to fear or hate *anybody*, has to be abandoned, if only a little at a time.

We can try to stop making unreasonable demands upon those we love. We can show kindness where we had shown none. With those we dislike we can begin to practice justice and courtesy, perhaps going out of our way to understand and help them.

Whenever we fail any of these people, we can promptly admit it—to ourselves always, and to them also, when the admission would be helpful. Courtesy, kindness, justice, and love are the keynotes by which we may come into harmony with practically anybody. When in doubt we can always pause, saying, "Not my will, but Thine, be done." (*humility*) And we can often ask ourselves, "Am I doing to others as I would have them do to me—today?"

When evening comes, perhaps just before going to sleep, many of draw up a balance sheet for the day. This is a good place to remember that inventory-taking is not always done in red ink. It's a poor day indeed when we haven't done *something* right. As a matter of fact, the waking hours are usually well filled with things that are constructive. Good intentions, good thought, and good acts are there for us to see. Even when we have tried hard and failed, we may chalk that up as one of the greatest credits of all. Under these conditions, the pains of failure are converted into assets. Out of them we receive the stimulation we need to go forward. Someone who knew what he was talking about once remarked that pain was the touchstone of all spiritual progress. How heartily we A.A.'s can agree with him, for we know that the pains of drinking had to come before sobriety and emotional turmoil before serenity.

As we glance down the debit side of the day's ledger, we should carefully examine our motives in each thought or act that appears to be wrong. (*think*) In most cases our motives won't be hard to see and understand. When prideful, angry, jealous, anxious, or fearful, we acted accordingly, and that was that. Here we need only recognize that we did act or think badly, try to visualize how we might have done better, and resolve with G-D's help to carry these lessons over into tomorrow, making, of course, any amends still neglected.

But in other instances only the closest scrutiny will reveal what our true motives were. There are cases where our ancient enemy, rationalization, has stepped in and has justified conduct which was really wrong. The temptation here is to imagine that we had good motives and reasons when we really didn't.

We “constructively criticized” someone who needed it, when our real motive was to win a useless argument. (1) Or, the person concerned not being present, we thought we were helping others to understand him, when in actuality, our true motive was to feel superior by pulling him down. (2) We sometimes hurt those we love because they need to be “taught a lesson,” when we really want to punish. (3) We were depressed and complained we felt bad, when in fact we were mainly asking for sympathy and attention. (4) This odd trait of mind and emotion, this perverse wish to hide a bad motive underneath a good one, permeates human affairs from top to bottom. This subtle and elusive kind of self-righteousness can underlie the smallest act or thought. Learning daily to spot, admit, and correct these flaws is the essence of character-building and good living. (1) An honest regret for harms done, (2) a genuine gratitude for blessings received, (3) and a willingness to try for better things tomorrow (4) will be the permanent assets we shall seek.

Having so considered our day, not omitting to take due note of things well done, and having searched our hearts with neither fear nor favor, we can truly thank G-D for the blessings we have received and sleep in good conscience.

TENTH STEP LETTER

WRITE:

Dear G-D,

I resent \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_.

I have fear that \_\_\_\_\_.

I have fear that \_\_\_\_\_ . (fear underneath the first one)

I have fear that \_\_\_\_\_ . (fear underneath the second one )

(and so forth about the fears)

I resent \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_.

I have fear etc.

I resent \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_.

I have fear etc.

I resent \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_.

I have fear etc.

(as many persons and resentments as you have)

SAY: Dear G-D, please remove all these resentments and fears. I pray only for the knowledge of Your Will for us and the power to carry it out. Send me the right thought, word, action. Show me what my next step should be.

Your name.

READ TO YOUR SPONSOR OR OTHER PROGRAM PERSON.

TEAR UP THE LETTER UP AND THROW IT AWAY!

## Step 10 & 11 Using the AEIOU Format

**"When we retire at night, we constructively review our day."**

**A**bstinent? What did my food look like today? Moderate? Mindful?  
Anything I do not feel good about in my food today?

**E**xercise? What did I do today for my physical recovery?

**I**? What did I do for myself today? My recovery? What did I do well today?  
Which character assets did I display today?

**O**thers? What did I do for another today? For an OA fellow? My family,  
community?

**U**ncover? Where was I resentful, selfish, dishonest, afraid? Is an  
inventory needed? Am I avoid looking at something, do I need to discuss it  
with another? Do I owe an apology?

**Y**ipee! What am I grateful for today?

JOE & CHARLIE'S DAILY INVENTORY

Characteristics of being in self will:			Characteristics of being in G-d's Will:
<b>Dishonesty</b>			<b>Honesty</b>
<b>Frightened</b>			<b>Courage</b>
<b>Inconsideration</b>			<b>Consideration</b>
<b>Pride</b>			<b>Humility - Seeking God's Will</b>
<b>Greed</b>			<b>Giving Or Sharing</b>
<b>Lust</b>			<b>What We Can Do For Others</b>
<b>Anger</b>			<b>Calmness</b>
<b>Envy</b>			<b>Gratitude</b>
<b>Sloth</b>			<b>Take Action</b>
<b>Gluttony</b>			<b>Moderation</b>
<b>Impatience</b>			<b>Patience</b>
<b>Intolerance</b>			<b>Tolerance</b>
<b>Resentment</b>			<b>Forgiveness</b>
<b>Hate</b>			<b>Love - Concern For Others</b>
<b>Harmful Acts</b>			<b>Good Deeds</b>
<b>Self-Pity</b>			<b>Self-Forgetfulness</b>
<b>Self-Justification</b>			<b>Humility - Seek God's Will</b>
<b>Self-Importance</b>			<b>Modesty</b>
<b>Self-Condernation</b>			<b>Self-Forgiveness</b>
<b>Suspicion</b>			<b>Trust</b>
<b>Doubt</b>			<b>Faith</b>

Use this sheet as suggested in the 12 and 12, Step 10: "Here we cast up a balance sheet, crediting ourselves with things well done, and chalking up debits where due."

# Are You On the Beam or Off the Beam?

"First we will wish to be reasonably certain that we are on [the AA beam](#)."  
- 12 and 12 - Step 9 - Page 84 ( Fifteenth Printing )

"We may often pass through Twelfth Step experiences where we will seem to be temporarily [off the beam](#)."  
- 12 and 12 - Step 12 - Page 110-111 ( Fifteenth Printing )

"Had I tried honestly and sincerely to practice the Twelve Steps I would have seen that I was getting [off the beam](#) - I would have found that there were some active resentments in my life, a terrific amount of self pity."  
- Alcoholics Anonymous - 3rd. Edition - Page 471 ( Bottom )  
[ The above removed in the 4th. Edition ]

<u>ON THE BEAM</u>	<u>OFF THE BEAM</u>
HONESTY	DISHONEST
FAITH	FEAR
COURAGE	FRIGHTENED
CONSIDERATE	INCONSIDERATE
HUMILITY	PRIDE
GIVING	GREEDY
CALM	ANGER
GRATEFUL	ENVY
PATIENCE	IMPATIENT
TOLERANCE	INTOLERANT
FORGIVENESS	RESENTMENT
LOVE	HATE
SELF - FORGETFULNESS	SELF-PITY
HUMILITY	SELF - JUSTIFICATION
MODESTY	SELF - IMPORTANCE
SELF - FORGIVENESS	SELF - CONDEMNATION
TRUST	SUSPICION
MODERATION	GLUTTONY
ACTION	SLOTH

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"You're not a failure until you fail to try."

- - -

Is it True? Is it Kind? Is it Necessary?

## Evening Review

Purpose: Identify and remove obstacles to the Sunlight of the Spirit.

### Set Aside Prayer

God, please set aside everything that I think I know about myself, my brokenness, my spiritual path and you, God, for an open mind and a new experience of myself, my brokenness, my spiritual path and especially you, God!

### Meditation

1. Constructively review my day (without fear or favor).

Was I:

Resentful?

Selfish?

Dishonest?

Afraid?

What motives were underneath my:

Intentions?

Thoughts?

Acts?

Effort?

Do I owe an apology?

Have I kept something to myself which should be discussed with another person at once?

Was I kind and loving to all?

What could I have done better?

Was I thinking of myself most of the time?

Or was I thinking of what I could do for others, of what I could pack into the stream of life?

2. Ask God's forgiveness!
3. Ask what corrective measures should be taken.
4. Thank God for blessings received!
5. Be willing to try again tomorrow!

## LAWRIE'S STEP 10

1. Am I restless? **(Doctor's Opinion)**
2. Am I irritable? **(Doctor's Opinion)**
3. Am I discontented? **(Doctor's Opinion)**
4. Am I having trouble with personal relationships? **(Bedevilments)**
5. Can I not control my emotional natures? **(Bedevilments)**
6. Am I prey to misery and depression? **(Bedevilments)**
7. Can I not make a living? **(Bedevilments)**
8. Do I have a feeling of uselessness? **(Bedevilments)**
9. Am I full of fear? **(Bedevilments)**
10. Am I unhappy? **(Bedevilments)**
11. Am I not of real help to other people? **(Bedevilments)**
12. Is my food or quantity of food getting sloppy?

## MIRIAM'S EVENING REVIEW

### Third Step Prayer

Hashem, I offer myself to You to build with me and do as you will. Relieve me of the bondage of self that I may better do Your Will. Take away my difficulties that victory over them will bear witness to those I would help of Your Power, Your Love and Your Way of Life. May I do Your Will always.

### Prayer for Judging Favorably

May it be Your will Hashem, my G-d, and the G-d of my forefathers, that You should assist me in Your mercy, guide me and show me the straight path, so that I will safeguard myself in Your mercy, not to stumble in anything not good and not to speak anything which is not in accordance with Your will. May I merit always to be good to everyone and that I should not find faults in anyone, Heaven forbid.

Rather, may I always be worthy to do my utmost, using all my capabilities to find merit and worth in each and every member of the Jewish people, Your holy nation, even the smallest of the small and even those who stand up against me. Through Your mercy, may I always merit to judge others favorably; may You bestow upon me the intelligence to understand how to search for and find redeeming factors, strengths and virtues in my fellow man at all times.

### Considerations

Was I resentful? Selfish? Dishonest? Afraid?

What motives were underneath my Intentions? Thoughts? Acts? Effort?

Do I owe an apology?

Have I kept something to myself which should be discussed with another person?

Was I kind and loving to all?

What could I have done better?

Was I thinking of myself? Or was I thinking of what I could do for others?

What corrective measures should be taken?

What am I GRATEFUL for today?

### Seventh Step 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.

Plans for tomorrow:

OA REGION 4 DAILY JOURNAL EVENING REVIEW

Su M T W Th F Sa

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Evening Review:** (or as the need arises)

Today, was I:

*Resentful?*

*Selfish?*

*Dishonest?*

*Jealous?*

*Fearful? (1. of losing something? 2. of not getting what I want? 3. of being found out?)*

*Irritable, restless or discontent?*

*Was I kind and loving toward all?*

*Do I owe an apology?*

*What did I do for others?*

*What could I have done better?*

*What did others do for me?*

*What did I do well?*

**Freedom from Bondage prayer**, Alcoholics Anonymous, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, p. 552:

**Refer to the "Self-will \* G-D's Will" chart on last page:**

Grant me freedom from \_\_\_\_\_ and replace it with \_\_\_\_\_

Grant me freedom from \_\_\_\_\_ and replace it with \_\_\_\_\_

Grant me freedom from \_\_\_\_\_ and replace it with \_\_\_\_\_

Grant me freedom from \_\_\_\_\_ and replace it with \_\_\_\_\_

Grant me freedom from \_\_\_\_\_ and replace it with \_\_\_\_\_

G-D, I pray for the health, prosperity, happiness, and well-being of:

\_\_\_\_\_

All the things I pray for myself, I pray also for \_\_\_\_\_

## Review prayer on last page. (see next page)

OA REGION 4 DAILY JOURNAL EVENING REVIEW (cont.)

<u>Self-will:</u>		<u>G-d's Will:</u>
Selfishness	*	Interest in Others/Altruism
Being Self-centered	*	Being Love-centered & G-D-centered
Dishonesty	*	Honesty
Fear	*	Faith & Trust in G-D
Being inconsiderate	*	Being Considerate
Pride	*	Humility, Seeking G-D's Will
Greed	*	Giving & Sharing
Lustful Thoughts	*	Respectful Thoughts
Anger	*	Serenity/Acceptance
Envy	*	Gratitude
Judgment	*	Acceptance
Sloth/Procrastinate	*	Taking Right Action
Gluttony	*	Moderation
Impatience	*	Patience
Intolerance	*	Tolerance
Resentment	*	Forgiveness
Hate	*	Love & Concern for Others
Harmful Acts	*	Good Deeds
Self-pity	*	Self-forgiveness
Self-justification	*	Humility & Truth
Self-importance	*	Modesty
Self-condemnation	*	Self-forgiveness
Suspicion/Jealousy	*	Trust
Doubt	*	Faith

(Big Book Study, O.A. Region Seven)

### Eleventh Step Prayer

*Reprinted from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. (p.99)*

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*“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 rather 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."*

## **MARCI'S STEP 10 AND 11 FORMAT**

### **Step 10 and 11 Format**

***(Marci's comments in italics)***

***From the Big Book: When we retire at night we constructively review our day.***

***(I like to review the commitments I have made to God, to myself and to my sponsor to see how I have done. For example: did I use the tools today? Have I planned and followed my plan of eating? Did I exercise?)***

***I then ask myself these questions from the Big Book (Step 11), and write brief answers where indicated.***

**Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid?  
*(If yes, a written inventory may be indicated)***

**Do we owe an apology?**

**Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another person at once?**

**Were we kind and loving toward all?**

**What could we have done better? *(This is a good place to look for my assets, what did I do well today?)***

**Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time?**

**Or were we thinking of what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life?**

**But we must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others. *(This is where I write out a 'gratitude list'.)***

**After making our review we ask God's forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken. *(This is where I write out a letter to God and spend some time in prayer and meditation.)***

