

Step Ten checklists

Square-bracketed numbers refer to the paragraph number in the 12 & 12 ('Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions').

Set out below are some checklists derived from the 12 & 12, to support the instructions on Step Ten and the Step Eleven review in the Big Book ('Alcoholics Anonymous') (pp. 84–86).

Basic disturbances to watch for:

- Anger [3]
- Fear [3]
- Jealousy [3]
- Envy [8]
- Self-pity [8]
- Hurt pride [8]
- Pride [11]
- Vengefulness [11]
- Anxiety [19]

Specific negative thinking/behaviour patterns to watch for:

- Speaking or acting hastily or rashly [11]
- Unkind tirades [11]
- Wilful snap judgements [11]
- Quick-tempered criticism [11]
- Furious power-driven argument [11]
- Sulking [11]
- Silent scorn [11]
- Vengefulness [11]
- Indulging in fantasies of still greater victories over people and circumstances [12]
- Prideful self-confidence [12]
- Playing the big shot [12]

- "Being possessively loving of a few" [15]
- "Ignoring the many" [15]
- "Continuing to fear or hate anybody" [15]
- Making unreasonable demands on those we love [16]
- Withholding kindness [16]
- Constructive criticism—to win a useless argument [21]
- Constructive criticism—to feel superior by pulling others down [21]
- Hurting those we love to punish them [21]
- Complaining we feel bad to gain sympathy and attention [21]

Specific positive thinking/behaviour patterns to cultivate:

- Self-restraint—restraint of tongue and pen [11]
- Fair-mindedness [11]
- Tolerance [11]
- Kindness [16]
- Courtesy [16]
- Going out of our way to understand others [16]
- Going out of our way to help others [16]
- Love [17]
- Doing to others as I would have them do to me [17]
- Honest regret [21]
- Genuine gratitude for blessings received [21]
- Willingness to try for better things tomorrow [21]

Questions and answers:

Is inventory-taking not an exercise in self-absorption?

Do I have to wait to take inventory?

- "This doesn't mean we need to wander morbidly around in the past. It requires an

admission and correction of errors now." [3]

Surely there are times our disturbance is the fault of others—and therefore excusable?

- "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." [7]

Surely anger is sometimes justified?

- "We have found that justified anger ought to be left to those better qualified to handle it." [7]

How do I decide whether the inventory is Step Ten, a Step Eleven review, or Step Four?

- "There's the spot-check inventory, taken at any time of the day, whenever we find ourselves getting tangled up. There's the one we take at day's end, 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. Many A.A.'s go in for annual or semi-annual house-cleanings." [4]

- "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, ..." [9]

How do I respond to the recurrence of familiar problems?

- "We need not be discouraged when we fall into the error of our old ways, for these disciplines are not easy." [10]

How do I avoid big-shot-ism?

- "... we can often check ourselves by remembering that we are today sober only by the grace of God and that any success we may be having is far more His success than ours." [13]

How can tolerance and love be fostered? Is there EVER a point to anger or hurt?

- "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." [14]

Does Step Ten/the Step Eleven review require deep or protracted analysis?

- "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 God's help to carry these lessons over into tomorrow, making, of course, any amends still neglected." [19]

What are the Step Ten promises in the 12 & 12?

The loss of fear of tomorrow:

- "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." [3]

The automatic nature of self-examination:

- "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." [5]

Emotional balance:

- "A spot-check inventory taken in the midst of such disturbances can be of very great help in quieting stormy emotions." [9]

The conversion of failure to asset:

- "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." [18]