

# *How to do Step 4 and Step 5 using the Assets and Liabilities*

## **Step 4: Courage**

**KEY PRINCIPLE: Make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**

For the Assets and Liabilities Checklist of the B2B, we fill out a list with a series of checkmarks with our list of resentments, fears and harms. Everything is discussed with your sponsor or sharing partner during the 5<sup>th</sup> step. Anything that needs to be written down further is usually done by the sponsor or sharing partner. The newcomer just speaks.

The list written is just a reminder of what things need to be spoken through in Step 5. It's quick. It's simple. Rather than three or four separate lists, the resentments, the fear and the harms get attended to simultaneously in a single grid. It looks something like this:

| <b>Liabilities</b> | <b>Mom</b> | <b>Neighbor</b> | <b>Dad</b> | <b>Girlfriend</b> | <b>Best Friend</b> | <b>Boss</b> | <b>Assets</b>        |
|--------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| <b>Resentment</b>  | <b>X</b>   |                 | <b>X</b>   | <b>X</b>          | <b>X</b>           | <b>X</b>    | <b>Forgiveness</b>   |
| <b>Fear</b>        | <b>X</b>   | <b>X</b>        | <b>X</b>   | <b>X</b>          | <b>X</b>           |             | <b>Faith</b>         |
| <b>Selfishness</b> |            |                 |            | <b>X</b>          | <b>X</b>           | <b>X</b>    | <b>Unselfishness</b> |
| <b>Dishonesty</b>  |            |                 |            | <b>X</b>          | <b>X</b>           | <b>X</b>    | <b>Honesty</b>       |
| <b>Jealousy</b>    |            |                 |            |                   |                    |             | <b>Trust</b>         |
| <b>Envy</b>        |            | <b>X</b>        |            |                   |                    |             | <b>Contentment</b>   |
| <b>Shame</b>       |            |                 | <b>X</b>   | <b>X</b>          | <b>X</b>           | <b>X</b>    | <b>Self-Love</b>     |

In this method, the healing is in the sharing rather than the writing. The main point of step 4 and 5 is to see where thoughts of self have defeated us. On page 64 it says: “being convinced that self, manifested in various ways had defeated us, we considered its common manifestations.” Our shortcomings stem directly from self. Self-centered thinking separates us from others. It blocks the “sunlight of the spirit.” This is spiritual sickness. The founders showed us that

thoughts of self block us from a spiritual experience. Steps 4 and 5 show us the blocks. Steps 6 and 7 help us to remove them.

### **1. List Resentments**

“Resentment is the “number one” offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have been spiritually sick. When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically.”

Hence, in dealing with resentments “we set them on paper. We list the people, institutions or principles with whom we are angry. (pp 64-69, AABB)

*What is the resentment?*

*What is the reason I have it?*

*What is my part in the resentment?*

*What is it that I am expecting from that person?*

### **2. Fears: list your current fears right now**

“This short word [fear] somehow touches about every aspect of our lives. It was an evil and corroding thread; the fabric of our existence was shot through with it. It set in motion trains of circumstances which brought us misfortune we felt we didn’t deserve. But did not we, ourselves, set the ball rolling? Sometimes we think fear ought to be classed with stealing. It seems to cause more trouble. We reviewed our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them.”

*What is the underlying fear?*

*Do I have any other fears?*

*Why do I have this fear?*

*Which part of self have I been relying on that failed me? Self-reliance, self-confidence, self-discipline, self-will? Isn't it because self-reliance fails you?*

*What part of self does the fear affect?: self-esteem, pride, emotional security, pocketbook, ambitions, personal relations, sex relations?*

*We ask for the fear to be removed. How would God have me be?*

### **3. List harms done to others**

“We reviewed our own conduct over the years past. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate? Whom had we hurt? Did we unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness? Where were we at fault? What should we have done instead? We got this all down on paper and looked at it.”

Who did I harm?

What did I do or fail to do that caused the harm?

For each relation or person we harmed, we ask: “Was it selfish or not?”

Additional questions:

Which part of self caused the harm?: Self-will, Self-esteem (Ego), emotional security, pocketbook – material security, pride/defiance/independence, self-pity, self-reliance, personal relationships, social ambitions, sexual ambitions, financial ambitions?

Where was I at fault? How was I: selfish, self-seeking, dishonest, inconsiderate, afraid, lack of self-discipline/self-control, playing God: trying to control others, self-centered/ego-centric?

What should we have done instead? How would God have me be? Do I owe an amends?

**4. Liabilities:** Using the simplistic grid list every person, place, thing, institution or concept to which they caused harm or harbor resentment or fear denoting, with a series of checkmarks, which liabilities apply to each.

Am I being selfish?

Am I being dishonest?

Do I have any fear?

Do I feel better or less than others?

Do I have any jealousy?

Do I have any envy?

Have I been lazy?

Do I have any shame? Do I have any thoughts, feelings or behaviors that make me feel ashamed?

Who was effected by any of the above character traits? (see AA OW and B2B 4<sup>th</sup> step forms for additional character traits)

The Big Book authors ask us to look at our assets as well as our liabilities. On page 124, they write: We grow by our willingness to face and rectify errors (liabilities) and convert them into assets. *What should I have done instead? How would God have me be? If this happens again, how might I respond differently?*

### **Alternative method:**

Sometimes, people have difficulty identifying how their character defects or strengths have fueled their resentments/fears/harms. In that case, the following questions can be helpful:

How did your character weaknesses or strengths affect the situation? Do you see any evidence of pride, self-pity, self-deception, or self-will in your attitudes and actions? Be sure to record also those times when you acted right.

*What outcome did I want in this situation and why?*

*How did I try to control the situation?*

*Was it any of my business?*

*What actions did I take or omit to get what I wanted?*

*Did I ignore reality?*

*Were my expectations reasonable for myself and for others?*

*Did I lie to myself or to others?*

*Did I ignore the feelings of others and think only of myself?*

*How did I act like a victim to control others, get attention and sympathy, be special, and so on?*

*Did I resist help from God and others?*

*Did I insist on being right?*

*Did I feel slighted for lack of recognition or acknowledgment?*

*List: What should I have done instead? How would God have me be? If this happens again, how might I respond differently?*

### **The Turnaround: Forgiveness, Faith, Amends, Assets**

According to the BB authors, we overcome resentment with forgiveness. On page 66, they write:

We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick. . . . We asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend.

We ask: *“Are you willing to forgive?”*

If there is anything that we are holding onto, we ask: *“Are you willing with prayer to ask God for the willingness to forgive?”*

According to the Big Book authors, we overcome fear with faith. On page 68, they explain:

The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. All men of faith have courage. They trust their God. . . . We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear.

We ask: *Are you willing to ask God to remove your fears?*

We overcome harms with amends. On page 69 of the AABB, the authors state:

We must be willing to make amends where we have done harm, provided that we do not bring about still more harm in so doing.

We ask our sharing partner: *Do I owe an amends?* If I have an outstanding apology, it must be made as soon as practicable once the review has been completed.

We ask: *Are you willing to forgive those who have harmed you?*

We ask: *Are you willing to let God removed from you all the things you find objectionable? Are you willing to ask God to help you let go of them?*

We ask God's forgiveness and what corrective measures should be taken.

Pray to have the character defect removed.

Say the 7<sup>th</sup> step prayer.

List: *What should I have done instead? How would God have me be? If this happens again, how might I respond differently?*

4. List your assets.

5. Share: "what do you have to be grateful for?"

6. Be of service to others and help carry the message. Think of someone who you can help.  
"Love and service is our code."

**Final 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 we have completed Step 5 and 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.”*

References:

<https://addictionrecovery.lds.org/steps/4?lang=eng>

<http://www.recoverytoday.net/articles/454-a-simple-but-not-easy-fourth-step-guide>

<http://rumradio.org/step-four-courage-to-look-in-the-mirror-without-our-disguise/#sthash.4PfZUazj.dpuf>

<http://www.recoverytoday.net/>

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