

## Step 4 Inventory

WELCOME to session number two of Emotional Sobriety 12 Steps in 4 Hours Beginner Meeting.

Step 4 made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Step 5: Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm an alcoholic/COE. Before we begin, let's have a moment of silence to invite the God of our own understanding into our hearts and ask for an open mind and the willingness to have a new experience... followed by the "Serenity Prayer"...

Meditation

Set Aside Prayer

So that we can complete each session within 1\_ hours and still provide ample time for questions, we request that you write down anything that you do not understand or need clarified and save it until the end of the session. We will answer questions at that time.

For anyone who came in late, as a group, we're taking the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous in meetings as they were taken in the 1940's and 50's.

During our first session we took Steps 1, 2, & 3.

As a review: In Step One, we conceded (or admitted) to our innermost selves that we are alcoholics, and that we had no reservations or lingering ideas that one day we will be UNAFFECTED by drinking alcohol. Then, in Step Two, through a simple conception (no matter how limited it was) we found we could come to believe in a Power greater than ourselves, which WILL solve our problem, so it will be done for us. Then, in Step Three, we made a decision to take the actions necessary (which are Steps Four through Nine) to move in the direction of turning our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him. The Big Book then told us that just DECIDING to turn our will and life over has LITTLE PERMANENT EFFECT unless we AT ONCE face and get rid of what BLOCKS US from actually turning our will and life over on a consistent basis. And the way we begin facing these things that block us from turning our will and lives over to the care of God, is by first taking a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves and then moving on with the rest of the program.

(Optional): Is there anyone here now who didn't have the opportunity to take the first three steps earlier and would like to do so now? If so, would you please stand. [Ask the First Step question:] Do you concede (admit) to your innermost self that you are alcoholic? Please answer, yes or no.

[Ask the Second Step question:] Do you now believe, or are you even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than yourself?

Please answer, yes or no.

[Ask the Third Step question:] Have you made a decision to turn your thinking and your actions over to the care of God as you understand Him – in other words: Have you decided to go through with the remaining steps in the Program of Recovery. Please answer, yes or no. Thank you, please be seated. If you answered yes to these questions, you have completed Steps One, Two, and Three.

Let's say the Third Step Prayer TOGETHER, as we did last session, to reconfirm our Third Step decision:

"God, I offer myself to Thee -- to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!"

#### **Step No. 4: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**

Chairperson: Step 4 —“made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

The intent and purpose of this step is plain. All alcoholics have a definite need for a good self-analysis — a sort of self - appraisal. Other people have certainly analyzed us, appraised us, criticized us and even judged us. It might be a good idea to judge ourselves, calmly and honestly. We need inventory because...

Reader: Let's consider these two reasons: Reason number one...

Chairperson: Either our faults, weaknesses, defects of character —are the cause of our drinking OR...,

Reader: Reason number two...

Chairperson: Our drinking has weakened our character and let us drift into all kinds off wrong action, wrong attitudes, wrong viewpoints. In either event we obviously need an inventory and the only kind of inventory to make is a GOOD one. Moreover, the job is up to US. WE created or WE let develop all the anti - social - actions that got US in wrong. So we have got to work it out. WE must make out a list of our faults and then WE must do something about it. The inventory must be 4 things...

Reader: 4 requirements. Requirement number 1...

Chairperson: It must be HONEST. Why waste time fooling ourselves with a phony list. We have fooled ourselves for years. We tried to fool others and now is a good time to look ourselves squarely in the eye.

Reader: Requirement number 2...

Chairperson: It must be SEARCHING. Why skip over a vital matter lightly and quickly. Our trouble is a grave mental disease, confused by screwy thinking. Therefore, we must SEARCH diligently and fearlessly to get at the TRUTH of what is wrong with us—just dig in and SEARCH.

Reader: requirement number 3...

Chairperson: It must be FEARLESS. We must not be afraid we might find things in our heart, mind and soul that we will hate to discover. If we do find such things they may be the ROOT of our trouble.

Reader: Requirement number 4...

Chairperson: It must be a MORAL inventory. Some, in error, think the inventory is a lot of unpaid debts, plus a list of unmade apologies. Our trouble goes much deeper. We will find the root of our trouble lies in—Resentment—False Pride—Envy—Jealousy—Selfishness—and many other things.

Laziness is an important one. In other words we are making inventory of our character—our attitude towards others—our way of living. We are not preparing a financial statement. We will pay our bills all right, because we cannot even begin to practice AA without HONESTY. Let's begin reading with the last paragraph, page 63...This Is Step Four.

Commentator: Here we have another time-line and requirement, these are for Step 4.

Reader: Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, which many of us had never attempted. Though our decision...

Commentator: Step Three

Reader: ..was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect....

Commentator: And here we have a major time-line and an explanation to Step Four.

Reader: ...unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us. Our liquor was but a symptom. So we had to get down to causes and conditions. Therefore, we started upon a personal inventory. This was Step Four.

Commentator: With the principle of courage, here begins the directions for Step Four.

Lets continue, line 18, same page.64

Reader: First, we searched out the flaws in our make-up, which caused our failure. Being convinced that self; manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us, we considered its common manifestations.

Commentator: The common manifestations of self, or demonstrations of self, or evidence of self, or proof of self are:

Reader: Resentment:

Commentator: Which is wrong judgment.

Reader: Fear

Commentator: Which is wrong believing.

Reader: Conduct:

Commentator: Which is wrong action. Lets continues, last paragraph, same page.

Reader: 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.

Commentator: This is the Fourth Step promise:

Reader: When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically

Commentator: Here are the directions to resentments:

Reader: In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper. We listed people, institutions or principles with whom we were angry. We asked ourselves why we were angry.

Commentator: Lets continue on page 65, line 3. Here are more directions to the resentments inventory.

Reader: On our grudge list we set opposite each name our injuries. Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal or sex relations, which had been interfered with?

Commentator: Go to the last paragraph on this same page, and here we have a requirement.

Reader: We went back through our lives. Nothing counted but thoroughness and honesty.

Commentator: Let's continue, go to Page 67, line 14.

Reader: Referring to our list again. Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened? Though a situation had not been entirely our fault, we tried to disregard the other person involved entirely. Where were we to blame? The inventory was ours, not the other man's. When we saw our faults we listed them. We placed them before us in black and white.

Commentator: Some more requirements.

Reader: We admitted our wrongs honestly and were willing to set these matters straight.

Commentator: Next paragraph, same page, we have another inventory.

Reader: Notice the word fear.

Commentator: Skip a line.

Reader: This short word 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.

Commentator: Here are the directions for the fear inventory. Next paragraph.

Reader: We reviewed our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them. We asked ourselves why we had them.

Commentator: Next we have the directions for another inventory, our own conduct. There are many kinds of conduct: sex, financial, social, physical, mental, emotional, the list goes on and ~~~ ~~~on. The book tells us what to do. Let's read page 69, line 12.

Reader: 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.

Commentator: There is a lot of fear and pain associated with the Fourth Step inventory.. Fear and pain did not get you drunk. You had to drink alcohol to get drunk. No alcohol, no drunk. No action, no drunk. No action on taking the steps, no sobriety. That's how it is. That is what it takes, action, not feelings.... Back in the 40's people blasted through the steps, so the newcomer was just moving out of the problem and just getting a glimpse of the solution in Step Four. The newcomer was still living in all the pain of being alcoholic. The point is that there will be left-overs that we forget to list in Step 4. Don't beat yourself up wallowing in the past. You can deal with the left-overs later on in Step 10, while looking at them from the solution's point of view. Do the best you can but move forward into the solution. Don't stop until you are finished with the Fourth Step. Go back to Page 68, line 11.

Reader: For we are now on a different basis; the basis of trusting and relying upon God. We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves. We are in the world to play the role He assigns. Just to the extent that we do as we think He would have us, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable us to match calamity with serenity.

Commentator: If we have taken Steps 2 & 3, we are on a different basis. We are looking at Step 4 from a different perspective. We can fill out these inventories without having to spend a lot of time worrying. Remember we trust infinite God rather than our finite

selves. The directions, time lines, requirements and prayers are in the Big Book, pages 63 through 71 for Step 4.

### **Format:**

The fourth step suggests that we take a “moral inventory” of ourselves, which is generally understood to mean that step workers must look carefully at their lives and report back honestly about what they see. There is, however, no clear agreement in the 12 step fellowships about exactly *how* one should look at oneself or exactly *what* step workers should look for while they are at it.

A careful examination of the AA BB reveals that the 4 column inventory that is now so common in the 12 step communities was not actually practiced in the early days of AA. Most people did the Assets and Liabilities type of 4<sup>th</sup> steps. The checklist is described on pages 64-69 in the AA BB and was used by many of the AA pioneers to take newcomers through the steps in the 1940's and 1950's. It precedes the 3 column inventory in the BB which is described on page 65. In fact, explanations on how to use the 3 column inventory weren't published until the 1970's.

Dr. Bob believed that initially, newcomers should be taken through a simplified version of the steps. Later, they can work the program in more detail.

[Personal aside: the earliest records of the 5 column written inventory date back only to the late 1960's which coincidentally was when cognitive behavioral therapy became popular. This inventory is similar to CBT, which is an examination of our thoughts, feelings and actions which fuel our resentments, fears and harms. The earlier step 4 moral inventory of the early AA program was based on examination of how our selfishness and self-seeking behaviors block us off from the God of our understanding rather than seeing the root of our problems as misdirected instincts.

I believe that it is the piety of the early founders of AA who focused on how our self-will blocked us off from doing God's will what the early AA program was so successful. They sought a spiritual solution to the problem of alcoholism as outlined in the BB, rather than a CBT solution. It cannot be a coincidence: since this inventory has become the standard format, 12 step recovery rates have dropped.]

One of the main differences between the two styles of 4th step is that the 4 column addresses Resentment, Fear and Sex, whereas, the Assets and Liabilities addresses Resentment, Fear and Harms; all harms including sexual and financial are covered. Somehow in the Big Book many of the instructions for harms got put under the main heading of "Sex" but really they were looking for all harms not just sex. This is still frequently passed on through the word of mouth program transmitted today.

In addition, the early AA program emphasized making restitution for harms done to others as essential for recovery. The ninth step promises only come true after we make our amends. The goal was not to do a perfect 4<sup>th</sup> step, but, to get to the place where we

can make amends for our past behaviors. Once we get right with others, we can focus on getting right with ourselves and God.

An example of the Assets and Liabilities format for step 4 is illustrated in Dr. Bob's approach on page 292 AA 3rd Ed. "...Dr. Bob's afternoon off, he had me down to the office and we spent three or four hours formally going through the Six-Step program as it was at that time. The six steps were:

1. Complete deflation
2. Dependence and guidance from a Higher Power
3. Moral inventory
4. Confession
5. Restitution
6. Continued work with other alcoholics

Dr. Bob led me through all of these steps. At the moral inventory, he brought up some of my bad personality traits such as selfishness, conceit, jealousy, carelessness, intolerance, ill-temper, sarcasm and resentments; we went over these at great length and then he finally asked me if I wanted these defects of character removed. When I said yes, we both knelt at his desk and prayed, each of us asking to have these defects taken away. (A similar paragraph is on the previous page) \*\*

This picture is still vivid. If I live to be a hundred, it will always stand out in my mind. It was very impressive and I wish that every AA could have the benefit of this type of sponsorship today. Dr. Bob always emphasized the religious angle very strongly, and I think it helped. I know it helped me. Dr. Bob then led me through the restitution step, in which I made a list of all the persons I had harmed, and worked out ways and means of slowly making restitution." (AAp.292-3rd ed.; AA p.263-4th ed.)

In short here's what they did:

1. Dr. Bob pointed out his defects and they discussed them. (Steps 4 & 5)
2. Dr. Bob asked Earl if he wanted these defects of character removed. "Are you willing to have God remove these defects of character?" (Step 6)
3. When the sponsee answered yes, they both knelt and asked God to remove their shortcomings. They both prayed. (Step 7)
4. Then Dr. Bob and Earl wrote out a list of the people Earl had harmed. (Step 8)
5. They went over that list figuring out ways to make an amends to each person.

Some of Dr. Bob's sponsees are alive today with over 50 years of sobriety and testify that they took the steps either in the hospital or at Dr. Bob's office the same way as Earl T. And Dr. Bob took over 4,800 people through the 12 Steps in his life time-that's about one person a day.

This 4th step consists essentially of one page that is duplicated as needed. How many copies needed will depend on how many names the person has on their resentment, fear and harms list. One of the great things about using this list is that it becomes very easy to do. Everything needed to take a person through steps 4 thru 9 is right there on one page. Once it is learned it is very simple to take a person through the steps and to show them how to take someone else through the steps. Self Will is all lined up on one side and God's Will is all lined up clearly on the opposite side of the list. The amends are all listed right there with all of the harms as well. It's easy to see why the founders preferred to use this style of 4th step to work the steps.

Doing a 4<sup>th</sup> step moral Inventory was not intended as a long, arduous process of self-introspection. That would have been considered grandiose or self-centered; the opposite of what the founders were trying to do. Daily inventory continued afterwards and a yearly 4th Step was often employed, but the initial 4th step was pretty simple and fast. They wanted to get a person while they were still in a hopeless state. "Till the black soil of hopelessness" as Dr. Silkworth said. This has to be done pretty soon after a person stops drinking or they will heal up and the ego will regain control.

For the Assets and Liabilities Checklist of the B2B, we fill out a list with a series of checkmarks for 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 written list below is just a reminder of what things need to be discussed in Step 5. It's quick. It's simple. Rather than three or four separate lists, the resentments, the fears 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>	X		X	X	X	X	<b>Forgiveness</b>
<b>Fear</b>	X	X	X	X	X		<b>Faith/Love</b>
<b>Selfishness</b>				X	X	X	<b>Unselfishness</b>
<b>Dishonesty</b>				X	X	X	<b>Honesty</b>

False Pride							Humility
Jealousy							Trust
Envy		X					Contentment
Laziness							Action
Shame			X	X	X	X	Self-Respect

In this method, the healing is in the sharing rather than the writing. Often a newcomer is too shaky to write inventory. If any writing was done at all, Dr. Bob (or whoever took the new man through the steps) would do the writing. Many times the Big Book suggests that the inventory should be written – but it doesn't say the newcomer has to do the writing. This is alluded to in the AA BB when Bill W. describes going through the steps with his friend Ebby (pp 133 (1-4) :

My schoolmate visited me, and I fully acquainted him with my problems and deficiencies. **We** made a list of people I had hurt or toward whom I felt resentment. I expressed my entire willingness to approach these individuals, admitting my wrong. Never was I to be critical of them. I was to right all such matters to the utmost of my ability.

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.

For the Step 4 Assets and Liabilities Inventory: List your resentments, current fears and harms done to others.

For resentment, ask the following questions:

What is the resentment? What is the reason I have it? What's my part in the resentment?

Look for the underlying fear.

What is it that I am expecting from the person?

Fears: For each fear, why do you have that fear?

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

Who did I harm?

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

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 I have done instead? How would God have me be? *If this happens again, how might I respond differently?* Do I owe an amends?

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.

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

**Forgiveness:** 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?*

**Amends:** 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.”

But "wrong" here does not have a *moral* overtone, but a *selfish* one. A "wrong" action or thought is an action where we were thinking entirely of ourselves.

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

To determine if we need to make an amends, we can test our actions based on the 4 absolutes. The four absolutes provide a simple, straight forward way to evaluate whether our thoughts, words or actions are self-centered or God-centered.

Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened? These shortcomings are based on self-will. To test for God’s will, we ask the opposite: was I unselfish, honest, pure and loving?

The pioneers often used the Four Absolutes as the opposites of Fear, Anger, Dishonesty and Selfishness (Self Will). So across from these “Liabilities” they used the “Assets” Love, Purity, Unselfishness and Honesty (God’s Will).

Self Will-----God’s Will  
Fear----- Love  
Anger-----Purity  
Selfishness----Unselfishness  
Dishonesty-----Honesty

Referring to the 4th Step, If a name has more than 1 or 2 marks under harms they are likely due amends. Put an A in the column and ask “How can you make amends to this person?”

Make sure to review the amends being made to insure that they are appropriate. Plan to discuss the amends before and after they are made. Step Nine is an ongoing process. Living in God's will, cleaning up the wreckage of the past and helping others repay our debt, "we are reborn".

[It is recommended that Pg 76-84 in AA and Step 8 & 9 in the 12& 12 and Little Red Book be read by the newcomer before any amends are made.]

[If I am still unwilling for any reason to make an amends I will ask myself the following questions:

My experience is this: If I am resisting a face to face amends I would ask myself a few questions after I had asked for Spiritual Discernment.

Do I still hold resentment toward that person?

Are my pride and/or fear blocking me from doing it?

Could it harm another or open an old hurt for them?

Could it cause problems with that person's current relations?

If the answer is not yet clear I will seek guidance from my sponsor and ultimately communicate my amends in our first language, silence, pray and wait for new insights.]

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

*We ask: Are you willing to let God remove 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."

**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.”*

## **Definitions:**

Resentment (Anger) – Hanging on to injury or anger; Refusing to accept what has already been done.

Fear: Holds us back from doing worthwhile things. Healthy fear helps avoid danger.

Courage is fear that has said its prayers. Everything we do is done out of love or fear. (Love is all things positive ; fear is all things negative )

Dishonesty (Lying & Evasiveness): To others and to ourselves. Stealing or cheating. Pretending that things are different than they are; this keeps us from coping with life (unrealistic).

Selfishness – Stinginess resulting from a concern for your own welfare and a disregard of others.

Hate – Continued anger, murderous feeling toward someone; extremely strong dislike toward someone. Prejudice or hate for a group. Continued resentment leads to hate.

Greed (Gluttony) – Wanting more than our share. A selfish motive. We can deceive ourselves into thinking we are doing a service rather than doing it for ourselves

Self-Pity – “Poor me” attitude; Thinking like a victim. Holds us back from doing something positive about our situation, like taking the Steps today.

Self-Justification – Defending ourselves rather than admitting our faults. Prevents taking an honest inventory.

Self-Importance (Egotism) - Putting ourselves first. Self-centeredness. Sometimes shyness comes out of it because we are focused on ourselves rather than others.

Self-Condensation (Guilt): Putting ourselves down; condemning what God has made. Bad self talk.

Laziness: unwilling to work; Undisciplined.

Bitterness - hard to bear; grievous; distressful

Procrastination – Putting things off. Leaves the burdens on others. Energy drain.

Impatience: Wanting what I want when I want it; expecting too much too soon; Refusal to surrender self-will (impatience with others). Remember how long it took us to get this way.

False Pride (Phoniness & Denial): Doing things for appearance rather than effectiveness. Trying to make other people think we are better than we are. Why am I afraid to tell you who I am? Won't ask for help.

Pride is a character defect that causes shame because we are ashamed of how things are. Pride causes self-condemnation. Pride causes feelings of guilt. Either feeling better than or less than someone else.

Jealousy – Fear of losing someone or something. Leads to anger or hatred toward anyone who threatens our claim to someone or something. Jealousy is related to fear.

Envy – Wanting what someone else has and thinking how to get it. Envy is related to greed.

Insincerity – Putting up false front; People pleasing. Two-faced and deceitful. Hypocritical; Acting like we care when we don't.

Negative Thinking – Dwelling on why things can't work. Pessimistic attitude. Discouraging others.

Vulgar, Immoral Thinking: Sexual fantasies, thoughts of violence (waiting for someone with a baseball bat/fantasizing about causing harm to others).

Intolerance (Perfectionism) – Never being satisfied with a result (nothing is ever good enough). Expecting too much of others and of ourselves.

Criticizing and Gossip (Loose Talk) – A faultfinding attitude. Repeating criticism of others. Malicious or careless gossip.

Inconsideration - Thoughtless of others, rude behavior, without due regard for the rights or feelings of others

Suspicion - the act or an instance of suspecting something wrong without proof.

## How I did my 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Step the B2B way:

When I was doing my 5th step with the person who took me through the B2B, we did not discuss the other character defects. With her, she asked me: "What or who are you resentful towards right now?" Then she asked: "What fears are you experiencing right now?" Finally she asked: "Have you harmed anyone? Do you think that you owe an amends?"

After that, she asked: "Are you willing to forgive the person towards whom you are feeling resentful?"

Are you willing, with prayer to forgive the person?

Are you willing to turn over your fears and have faith in God?

Are you willing to make amends for the harms that you have done?

Are you willing to have God remove the defects of character that are blocking you from Him?"

There was no discussion about the other defects that are listed on the step 4 inventory sheet.

So, what do we do with the other qualities that are listed on the grid?"

Do the liabilities apply to the person towards whom we are feeling resentful, fearful or harmed? Or, do we go through each liability and ask: Do you have any XXXXX (i.e. self-pity)? Who was affected by XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX (i.e. self-pity)?

She said: "There is no right or wrong way to do a 4th step. It can be done with the liabilities as they apply to the specific resentment, fear or harm; or, they can be addressed in a more general way: where and to whom have you been dishonest, selfish, full of false pride.....?"

She said: "It depends on where you are at this moment. The purpose of the 4th step is to remove the blockages to God caused by self will. The goal is to rid ourselves of our selfishness and self-seeking behaviors which block us off from Him."

Earlier this week, I tried to contact the group who wrote the step guide AA The Original Way. I must share his response:

Thank you for your interest. We use the guide for the step work. It takes us through steps 1 thru 9 in about half a day.

The instructions are pretty simple. We write all the names first. Then do the columns. Whatever feels right is fine. It's about seeing the damage of Self will and aspiring to God's Will. Never let it be said that God is not communicating with each and every one of us continuously on a daily basis. He is, it is just that we are usually so wrapped up in ourselves that we usually can't hear him.

This is the format used by the early AA pioneers, based upon the directions that are in the Big Book. Use God, your sponsor and the Big Book to complete the inventory process. It is quite simple to do, just follow the directions. The interesting thing is, that the inventory process, the forms you've been provided with, and the whole deal in the Big Book, everything has already been figured out!! We are not going to add anything to this process except action. It works PRECISELY THE WAY IT IS!! The end result of this proven inventory process is: You will have the analyzed truth about you, you will be armed with the facts, and will have the components you need to complete the rest of the steps. Now let's read what the book tells us in summary to the 4th Step inventory. Go to Page 70, line 23.

Reader: If we have been thorough about our personal inventory, we have written down a lot. We have listed and analyzed our resentments. We have begun to comprehend their futility and their fatality. We have commenced to see their terrible destructiveness. We have begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even our enemies, for we look on them as sick people. We have listed the people we have hurt by our conduct, and are willing to straighten out the past if we can. In this book you read again and again that faith did for us what we could not do for ourselves. We hope you are convinced now that God can remove whatever self-will has blocked you off from Him. If you have already made a decision,

Commentator: Step Three.

Reader: and an inventory of your gross handicaps,

Commentator: Step Four.

Reader: you have made a good beginning. That being so you have swallowed and digested some big chunks of truth about yourself

Commentator: By writing this Fourth Step inventory, the things that have been blocking us are in the process of being removed. We are not going to take Steps Four and Five in this class. We suggest that over the next week, you list your resentments, fears and harms and complete your 5<sup>th</sup> step with your sharing partner over the next week. Please allow up to 2 hours to complete your 5<sup>th</sup> step, which incidentally will also include your steps 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Follow the sharing partner guidelines that were send out with the handout. Additional guidelines are also posted on the blog.

For those of you who are going to take steps 4 & 5 over the next week, for your benefit, let's look at Step 5. Before we get into the Big Book, let's listen as (\_\_\_\_\_) (chairperson) reads Step 5 from the 1944 pamphlet.

Chairperson: STEP NO. 5—"Admitted to GOD, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

Reader: Let's take a look at these six points. Point number 1:

Chairperson: There is nothing new in this step. There are many sound reasons for “talking over our troubles out loud with others”.

Reader: Point number 2.

Chairperson: The Catholic already has this medium readily available to him in the Confessional. But—the Catholic is at a disadvantage if he thinks his familiarity with confession permits him to think his part of AA is thereby automatically taken care of. He must, in confession, seriously consider his problems in relation to his alcoholic thinking.

Reader: Point number 3.

Chairperson: The non-Catholic has the way open to work this step by going to his minister, his doctor, or his friend.

Reader: Point number 4.

Chairperson: Under this step it is not even necessary to go to a priest or minister. Any understanding human being, friend or stranger, will serve the purpose.

Reader: Point number 5.

Chairperson: The purpose and intent of this step is so plain and definite that it needs little explanation. The point is that we MUST do EXACTLY what the Fifth Step says, sooner or later. We must not be in a rush to get this step off our chest. Consider it carefully and calmly. Then get about it and do it.

Reader: Point number 6.

Chairperson: “Wrongs” do not necessarily mean “crime”. It can well be wrong thinking—selfishness—false pride—egotism—or any one of a hundred such negative faults. Go to page 72, line 29 and here we have a warning that says we may not overcome drinking if we skip this vital step.

Reader: If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking. Time after time newcomers have tried to keep to themselves certain facts about their lives. Trying to avoid this humbling experience, they have turned to easier methods. Almost invariably they got drunk. Having persevered with the rest of the program, they wondered why they fell. We think the reason is that they never completed their housecleaning. They took inventory all right, but hung on to some of the worst items in stock. They only thought they had lost their egoism and fear; they only thought they had humbled themselves. But they had not learned enough of humility, fearlessness and honesty, in the sense we find it necessary, until they told someone else all their life story.

Commentator: Go to page 74, line 2. Here are some options on who is to hear our story. Also, there is a requirement that is a warning.

Reader: We think well before we choose the person or persons with whom to take this intimate and confidential step.

Commentator: Skip a line.

Reader: go to the properly appointed authority.

Commentator: Next line.

Reader: Talk with someone ordained.

Commentator: Skip 4 lines.

Reader: a close-mouthed, understanding friend.

Commentator: Same line.

Reader: doctor or psychologist.

Commentator: Next line.

Reader: One of our own family.

Commentator: Skip 3 lines for a warning.

Reader: Such parts of our story we tell to someone who will understand, yet be unaffected.

Commentator: Same line a major requirement.

Reader: The rule is we must be hard on ourselves, but always considerate of others.

Commentator: Next paragraph, skip one line, the time line says:.

Reader: it may be one is so situated that there is no suitable person available. If that is so, this step may be postponed.

Commentator: Requirement.

Reader: only, however, if we hold ourselves in complete readiness to go through with it at the first opportunity.

Commentator: Skip a line, more requirements.

Reader: It is important that he be able to keep a confidence; that he fully understand and approve what we are driving at...

Commentator: Go to Page 75, line 3, for another time-line.

Reader: When we decide who is to hear our story, we waste no time.

Commentator: Here we have some directions.

Reader: We have written inventory and we are prepared for a long talk. We explain to our partner what we are about to do and why we have to do it. He should realize that we are engaged upon a life and-death errand.

Commentator: Next paragraph, more directions.

Reader: We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past.

Commentator: Let's explore the time-line requirements, and directions for after we complete Step Five. Skip to the last paragraph on this same page.

Reader: Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done.

Commentator: Here we have the 5th Step Prayer.

Reader: We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better.

Commentator: Let's continue studying, same line.

Reader: Carefully reading the first five proposals.

Commentator: Meaning to re-read the book, pages XXIII to page 75. Let's continue with the next line.

Reader: we ask if we have omitted anything, for we are building an arch through which we shall walk a free man at last. Is our work solid so far? Are the stones properly in place? Have we skimmed on the cement put into the foundation? Have tried to make mortar without sand?

Commentator: Step 5 teaches us the spiritual principle of integrity. In summary, the directions are very clear on why, when, and how to take Step 5, as are the time-lines and requirements. This is what happens as the result of taking Step 5, the 5th step promises, page 75, line 12.

Chairman: 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.

This is the end of the 2nd class. Next week's class will cover Steps 6, 7, 8, & 9. Homework for this class is: Read and discuss with your sponsor Pages 44 through 75 and do Steps 4 & 5. If you have any questions, comments or points of discussion, talk with your sponsor.

Serenity Prayer

## References:

<http://stepstudy.org/>

<http://www.aatheoriginalway.com/online-bible>

<http://www.aatheoriginalway.com/aa-4th-and-5th-step>

<http://www.bigbooksponsorship.org/downloads/4-hour-12-steps.pdf>

<http://our12steps.com/big-book-process-steps-4-5-session2/>

<http://www.sober.org/>

<http://www.aabacktobasics.org/B2B%20Book.html>

[https://www.justloveaudio.com/resources/Assorted/Mike\\_Kathy\\_L\\_B2B\\_Beginners\\_Classes.pdf](https://www.justloveaudio.com/resources/Assorted/Mike_Kathy_L_B2B_Beginners_Classes.pdf)

[https://www.justloveaudio.com/resources/12\\_Steps\\_Recovery/The\\_Big\\_Book\\_Step\\_Workgroup\\_Back\\_to\\_the\\_1940s/Back\\_to\\_the\\_1940s\\_Leader\\_Script.pdf](https://www.justloveaudio.com/resources/12_Steps_Recovery/The_Big_Book_Step_Workgroup_Back_to_the_1940s/Back_to_the_1940s_Leader_Script.pdf)

[https://www.justloveaudio.com/resources/Assorted/An\\_Interpretation\\_of\\_our\\_Twelve\\_Steps\\_Table\\_Talk.pdf](https://www.justloveaudio.com/resources/Assorted/An_Interpretation_of_our_Twelve_Steps_Table_Talk.pdf)

<http://hindsfoot.org/archives.html>

[http://www.angelfire.com/poetry/healspirit/AA%2012\\_steps\\_as\\_originally\\_taken.html](http://www.angelfire.com/poetry/healspirit/AA%2012_steps_as_originally_taken.html)

<http://www.spiritualsteps.com/2014/aa/step4.pdf>