The Four Absolutes: the basics

Some people were curious to know more about the 4 Absolutes, which are the foundation principles of program.

What were the “Four Absolutes” that were part of the Oxford Group?

The Oxford Group, a Christian fellowship out of which A.A. grew, had four guiding spiritual goals that they tried to practice to the fullest extent possible. These ideals called for:

Absolute Honesty
Absolute Unselfishness
Absolute Love
and
Absolute Purity

The absolutes were used by the Oxford Group in at least three specific ways:

1 – As a way to take inventory of our past to see where we fell short and in what ways, so that we could learn what areas of our life need to be worked on.

2 – During meditation or while being inspired or guided by our Inner Voice, as a way to differentiate between “God” thoughts and human thoughts.

3 – As a standard of living, moment by moment.

How can I know God’s Will for me?
Use the 4 Absolutes: ABSOLUTE LOVE, ABSOLUTE HONESTY, ABSOLUTE UNSELFISHNESS AND ABSOLUTE PURITY

When I am examining my thoughts, words, and actions:

Am I acting out of Love?

Am I being honest?

Am I acting unselfishly?

Are my motives pure?

When I am doubtful or between activities:

Ask: How would God would have me be in the present or upcoming situation?

Personally, I say: “God, please show me You Will and align my will with Your Will so that I should do Your Will always. Please bless me with the right thoughts, words and actions and guide me to make the next right step.”

Dr. Bob and the 4 Absolutes

In 1948, Dr. Bob recalled the Absolutes as “the only yardsticks” A.A. had in the early days, before the official Twelve Steps. He said he still felt they held good and could be extremely helpful when he wanted to do the right thing and the answer was not obvious. “Almost always, if I measure my decision carefully by the yardstick of the absolutes and it checks up pretty well with those four, then my answer can’t be very far out of the way,” he said.

The Four Absolutes are still published in pamphlet form (included below) by the Cleveland Central Committee of A.A. and are widely quoted at A.A. meetings in the Akron-Cleveland area.
A copy of the pamphlet can be ordered by calling the A.A. Intergroup at 216-241-7387 (Cleveland) or 330-253-8181 (Akron).

Bill Wilson included the absolutes specifically in Steps 4, 5, 10 & 11 as found in the Big Book. However, he used them in their opposite self-will form, since we need to see where self-will fails us:

4 ABSOLUTES of the OXFORD GROUP and the A.A. FOUR STANDARDS

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<tr>
<th>4 ABSOLUTES</th>
<th>A.A. 4 STANDARDS</th>
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<td>Honest</td>
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GUIDANCE FROM GOD          GUIDANCE FROM SELF

| Honest   | Dishonest |
| Pure     | Resentful |
| Loving   | Fearful   |
| Unselfish| Selfish   |

4th Step Standards – Big Book, pg. 67, paragraph 2, lines 3-4

10th Step Standards – Big Book, pg. 84, paragraph 2, lines 8-9

I am also attaching a brief summary of them, written by someone else.

Please look elsewhere on the blog for more expanded explanations of these wonderful principles.

References:
You can read more about The Four Absolutes at [this link](http://anonpress.org/faq/5)


With blessings for peace and recovery,

Shira


The_Four_Questions.pdf