



# Big Book Experience

*"A design for living the 12 Steps"*

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Welcome to the "Big Book Experience". At the registration table, please write your name, phone # and e-mail address, so we can keep in touch with you. Please put on a name tag so we know who you are. We will be taking all 12 Steps today as outlined in the book Alcoholics Anonymous. This is not a short-cut to A.A. This is a brief course in the fundamentals. The Twelve Steps of recovery always were, and still are, a **simple spiritual program of action**. Because of limited time, we ask that you save any questions you may have as we go along. No question pertaining to recovery is silly or irrelevant. We learn by exchanging our thoughts and experiences with each other. We will answer them at the end of each session. We have provided paper and pens for you to write them down and take notes as we go along. We will be taking breaks about every hour and fifteen minutes, however please feel free at any time to get up and stretch or walk around. Out of respect for others please keep the talking and activities down to a minimum. Please turn off your cell phones or put on vibrate. It's going to be a long day, so we'll try to keep you interested and comfortable. We hope you will enjoy this exciting spiritual journey through the Twelve Steps that we will be taking together today.

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 p. 24 Para 1, 2, 3 + 4 to 25  
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 p. 31 Para 1  
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**Write out inventory****STEP FIVE**

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**NOTES:**

Set-Aside Prayer

**"God, Please help me set aside everything I think I know about myself, the Twelve Steps, the Big Book, the meetings, my disease, and you God, so I may have an open mind and a new experience with all these things. Please let me see the truth." Amen**

(Pgs. 44-57)

1<sup>st</sup> Step Prayer

**My Creator, I admit that I am powerless over my alcoholism. I admit that my life is unmanageable when I try to control it. Help me this day to understand the true meaning of my powerlessness. Remove from me all denial of my alcoholism. Amen**

(Pgs. 30-43)

2<sup>nd</sup> Step Prayer

**Higher Power, I pray for an open mind so I may stay teachable. I know in my heart that only you can restore me to sanity. I humbly ask that you remove all twisted thoughts from me this day. Heal my spirit & restore in me a clear mind. Amen (Pgs. 44-57)**

3<sup>rd</sup> Step Prayer

**God, I offer myself to Thee-to build with me and 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!" Amen (Pg. 63 2 para. Lines 2-8)**

4<sup>th</sup> Step "Anger Prayer"

**God, Please help me show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that I would cheerfully grant a sick friend. How can I be helpful to them? God save me from being angry. Please show me how to take a kindly and tolerant view of everyone. Thy Will be done. Amen. (Pg. 67 lines 3-8)**

4<sup>th</sup> Step "Fear Prayer"

**"God, please demonstrate, through me, what You can do. Please remove my fear and direct my attention to what You would have me be. Help me to outgrow fear." Thy Will be done. AMEN" (pg. 68 3 Para. Lines 6-10)**

4<sup>th</sup> Step Prayer for "Sex Ideal"

**"God, I pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing. Help me to mold my ideal and help me to live up to it. God what should I do about each specific matter? May I do your will always. AMEN" (Pg. 70 2 Para. Lines 1-4)**

4<sup>th</sup> Step Prayer before writing.

***God, It is I who has made my life a mess. I have done it, but I cannot undo it. My mistakes are mine & I will begin a searching & fearless moral inventory. I will write down my wrongs But I will also include that which is good. I pray for the strength to complete the task. Amen***

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Step Decision

Made a decision to our will (thinking) and our lives (actions) over to the care of God. We first turn our thinking over by checking what we think, with this simple question below.

## **SELF-WILL**

## **GOD'S WILL**

### **STEP THREE question**

#### **Is it selfish or not?**

Selfishness

(p. 60-62)

Unselfishness

(p. 63)

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#### **Fourth Step Thinking and Actions inventory (p. 64-69)**

Resentment

(p. 64)

Forgiveness/ Purity

Fear

(p.67)

Faith/ Love

Selfish

Dishonest

(p. 69)

Unselfishness

Honesty

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#### **Tenth Step Thinking and Actions Test (p.84)**

Selfishness

Dishonesty

Resentment

Fear

Unselfishness

Honesty

Forgiveness/ Purity

Faith/ Love

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#### **Eleventh Step Thinking and Actions Test (p.86)**

Resentful

Selfish

Dishonest

Afraid

Forgiveness/Purity

Unselfishness

Honesty

Faith/Love

# INVENTORY DEFINITIONS – LIABILITIES

## RESENTMENT

“Re” means “again” and “sentire” means to “feel”. It is experienced when we re-feel anger over a deep sense of personal injury from something from our **past** whether real or imagined. Resenting someone is wrong thinking. **(Resentment is always about the past.)**

## SELFISH

is caring **only** for our own needs or desires while neglecting the well being of others. **(Don’t confuse selfishness with self-care.)**

## DISHONEST

is when we are untrustworthy, steal, cheat, or lie, including with holding the truth “except when to do so would injure” someone. Others form of dishonesty are embellishment, exaturation, and making up excuses. Most importantly, not being genuine or real, and not being “yourself” is also dishonest.

## FEAR

is being afraid that we will lose something or not get something we think we need to be content. It is anxious anticipation of **future** danger or pain. **(Fear is always about the future.)**

## INCONSIDERATE

is not caring about the welfare or feelings of others. It is thoughtless, careless behavior that includes insensitivity, rudeness, being lazy, not following through with an assigned task or promise, and not being accountable.

## FALSE PRIDE

is a deceptive or false sense of one’s self. It is either feeling better than or less than someone else. Feelings of superiority include: **egoism**- being conceited and boastful; sarcasm- insulting or mocking people; gossip- putting people down so we look or feel better; and having prejudices against races, religions, cultures, etc.

Feelings of inferiority include: **self-pity**- feeling sorry for ourselves; being self conscience- embarrassed or overly concerned about how others perceive us; and having **low self-esteem**- lacking self respect or self worth.

**Did I unjustifiably arousing these emotions in others?**

**JEALOUSY-** Is envy or fearing unfaithfulness.

**SUSPICIOUS-** Is mistrust or doubt.

**BITTERNESS-** A severe, painful feeling toward an experience or individual. It is characterized by a harsh and cruel intensity.

| <b>SELF-WILL<br/>LIABILITIES</b>     |   |   |   |   |   |   | <b>GOD'S-WILL<br/>ASSETS</b> |   |  |  |  |  |                      |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|----------------------|
| Resentment                           |   |   |   |   |   |   | Mother                       |   |  |  |  |  | Forgiveness / Purity |
|                                      | X |   |   |   |   |   | Father                       |   |  |  |  |  |                      |
| Selfishness                          |   |   |   |   |   |   | Brother                      |   |  |  |  |  | Unselfish(ness)      |
|                                      | X | X |   |   |   |   | x-wife                       | X |  |  |  |  |                      |
| Dishonesty                           |   |   |   |   |   |   | Girlfriend                   | X |  |  |  |  | Honest(y)            |
|                                      |   |   | X |   |   |   | Uncle                        | X |  |  |  |  |                      |
| Fear/ Frightened                     |   |   |   |   |   |   | Work                         | X |  |  |  |  | Faith/Love           |
|                                      |   |   |   |   | X | X | Police                       |   |  |  |  |  |                      |
| Inconsiderate                        |   |   |   |   |   |   | God                          | X |  |  |  |  | Considerate          |
|                                      | X |   |   |   |   |   | Myself                       | X |  |  |  |  |                      |
| False Pride                          |   |   |   |   |   |   |                              |   |  |  |  |  | Humility             |
|                                      |   |   | X |   |   |   |                              |   |  |  |  |  |                      |
| Did I unjustifiably<br>Arouse/ Cause |   |   |   |   |   |   |                              |   |  |  |  |  | Amends               |
|                                      |   |   |   |   |   |   |                              |   |  |  |  |  |                      |
| Jealousy                             |   |   |   |   |   |   |                              |   |  |  |  |  | Amends               |
|                                      |   |   | X |   |   |   |                              |   |  |  |  |  |                      |
| Suspicion                            |   |   |   |   |   |   |                              |   |  |  |  |  | Amends               |
|                                      |   |   |   | X |   |   |                              |   |  |  |  |  |                      |
| Bitterness                           |   |   |   |   |   |   |                              |   |  |  |  |  | Amends               |
|                                      |   |   | X | X |   |   |                              |   |  |  |  |  |                      |
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|--------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|---------|------------|-------------|----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>SELF-WILL<br/>LIABILITIES</b>     |                      |               |         |            |             |          |        |        |        |        |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Resentment                           |                      |               |         |            |             |          |        |        |        |        |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Selfish-Self Seeking                 |                      |               |         |            |             |          |        |        |        |        |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Dishonesty                           |                      |               |         |            |             |          |        |        |        |        |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Fear/ Frightened                     |                      |               |         |            |             |          |        |        |        |        |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Inconsiderate                        |                      |               |         |            |             |          |        |        |        |        |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| False-Pride                          |                      |               |         |            |             |          |        |        |        |        |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Did I unjustifiably<br>Arouse/ Cause |                      | FOLD          | HERE    |            |             |          |        |        |        |        |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Jealousy                             |                      |               |         |            |             |          |        |        |        |        |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Suspicion                            |                      |               |         |            |             |          |        |        |        |        |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bitterness                           |                      |               |         |            |             |          |        |        |        |        |   |   |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>GOD'S-WILL<br/>ASSETS</b>         | Forgiveness / Purity | Unselfishness | Honesty | Faith/Love | Considerate | Humility | Amends | Amends | Amends | Amends | ~ | 7 | ~ |  |  |  |  |  |

# INVENTORY DEFINITIONS - ASSETS

## **FORGIVENESS**

is when we no longer feel resentment and let go of our anger from past personal offender. Forgiveness is **pure**. It is “right-thinking”.

## **UNSELFISHNESS**

is being charitable, giving, and generous and generally caring about others.

## **HONESTY**

is when we don't lie, cheat or steal. We are truthful and fair, and don't try to deceive ourselves or others.

## **FAITH/ LOVE**

**Faith** is complete trust, confidence and reliance upon the value of someone or something (a Power greater than ourselves). It is an unquestionable belief and certainty that our Higher Power will always meet our needs.

**Love** is the strongest word for liking or having affection for someone or something. (Higher Power) It implies passion and devotion. We strive to love all mankind. When we are faithful we are acting loving. When our actions are loving we are living in God's will.

## **CONSIDERATE**

is being kind, thoughtful and polite. It is caring honesty for the welfare of others and their feelings.

## **HUMILITY**

is when we have a true sense of ourselves-knowing that we are not better than or less than others. It includes modesty-not being boastful or “showing off”, excepting compliments with grace, and feeling good about oneself and ones accomplishments

We have and show awareness of our own assets and liabilities.

## **AMENDS**

**are made when one corrects, improves or rectifies behaviors and actions. It is also when compensation is made for insult or injury.**



**5<sup>th</sup> Step Group Prayer**

***God, We thank you from the bottom of our hearts that we know you better. Help us become aware of anything we may have omitted. Please give us the courage and the strength to discuss this with another person now. Help us to do what is necessary to walk a free man at last. AMEN (Pg. 75 3 Para. Lines 3-9)***

**5<sup>th</sup> Step Prayer**

***God , I thank you from the bottom of my heart that I know you better. Help me become aware of anything I may have omitted. Please give me the courage and the strength to discuss this with another person now. Help me to do what is necessary to walk a free man at last. AMEN (Pg. 75 3 Para. Lines 3-9)***

**6<sup>th</sup> Step Prayer**

***God, Please help me become willing to let go of all the things to which I still cling. Help me to be ready to let You remove all of these defects, that Your will and purpose may take their place. AMEN (Pg. 76 1 Para. Lines 3-7)***

**7<sup>th</sup> Step Prayer**

***My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now removed 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. Amen. (Pg. 76 2 Para. Lines 1-7)***

**8<sup>th</sup> Step Prayer**

***God, Please help me to become willing to sweep away the debris of self will and self reliant living. Thy will be done for this person as well as for me. Help me to be willing to go to any lengths for victory over alcohol. AMEN (Pg. 76 3 Para. Lines 8-13)***

**9<sup>th</sup> Step Prayer**

***God, please give me the strength, courage and direction to do the right thing, no matter what the personal consequences may be. Help me not to shrink from anything. Help me not to delay if it can be avoided. Help me to be sensible, tactful, considerate and humble without being servile or scraping. Amen (Pg. 79 1 Para. Lines 4-9)***

**A 9<sup>th</sup> Step Prayer for the Spouse:**

***"God, please show me how to make amends to my Spouse. Father , Help me to keep my Spouse's happiness Uppermost in my mind as I try, with your Grace, to make this relationship right. Amen" (Pg. 82 1 Para. Lines 4 & 5)***

**A 9<sup>th</sup> Step Prayer for the Family:**

***"God, please show me how to find the way of Patience, Tolerance, Kindness and Love in my heart, my Mind and my Soul. Show me how to demonstrate these principles to my family and all those about me. Amen." (Pg. 83 1 Para. Lines 8-10)***

**9<sup>th</sup> Step Prayer**

***God, Please give me the strength, courage and direction to do the right thing, no matter what the consequences may be. Help me to consider others and not harm them in any way. Help me to consult with others before I take any actions that would cause me to be sorry. Help me to not repeat such behaviors. Show me the way of Patience, Tolerance, Kindliness, and Love and help me live the spiritual life. AMEN (Pgs. 79-83)***

**A 10<sup>th</sup> Step prayer for Growth and Effectiveness:**

**God, I pray I may continue to grow in understanding & effectiveness. Please help me watch for Selfishness, Dishonesty, Resentment and Fear. When these crop up in me, help me to immediately ask you to remove them from me and help me discuss these feelings with someone. Help me to quickly make amends if I have harmed anyone and help me to resolutely turn my thoughts to someone I can Help. Help me to be Loving and Tolerant of everyone today. Amen  
(Pg. 84 2 Para. Lines 6-14)**

**Self-Will**

**Test**

***No Power***

Continue to

STEP TEN =SPOT CHECK

Watch For:     INVENTORY

**God's Will**

**Test**

***Power***

Continue to

Strive for:

***4 Absolutes***

|             |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                    |
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Any one of these is Self-Will  
When these crop up, We ask God at once to remove them.

Must have all 4 to be God's Will.

**Love and Tolerance of others is our code.**

**10<sup>th</sup> Step Prayer**

**God, Help me to carry the vision of your will into all of my activities. How can I best serve you? Your will not mine be done today. Amen  
(Pg. 85 1 Para. Lines 6-8)**

## **Step Eleven**

Upon waking:

**God, please direct my thinking today, especially divorcing them from self-pitying, dishonest, and self-seeking motives. Please help me employ the mental faculties you have so graciously given me, and place my thought-life on the plane of inspiration. Amen (Pg. 86 2 Para. Lines 3-9)**

Conclude by asking the broad question **“God what else would you have me do today?”** Sit quietly and wait for direction. (Use a 3 x 5 index card or personal pocket composition pad to write down what comes to you in your meditation.

**God, During this Quiet time I pray that my writing will reflect that my life is presently being guided by the spiritual principles of Honesty, unselfishness, purity and love. I pray to open myself to receive your guidance. I pray for the will to take your direction in a timely manner, that I may continue to grow spiritually and experience a profound life of serenity and joy. AMEN**

| <b>God's Will (EXAMPLE)</b>                             |
|---|
| - Call Jeff   |
| <del>- Visit Jim in the hospital to offer support</del> |
| - Clean up the yard around house                        |
| - Sit quietly and be in the presence of God.            |
| <del>- Sign up for A.A. Roundup</del>                   |
| - Have more patience and tolerance of others            |
| - Be more patient with my son                           |
| -fix dripping faucet in bathroom                        |
|   |

Carry it with you throughout the day. As you complete tasks, cross them off. Each time you look at the list contemplate what **God's will is for you** today. Specifically looking for guidance or direction for the day.

Do these past the test of Honesty, Unselfishness, Purity and Love?

**“be more patient with my son”,  
“Have more patience and tolerance of others” and  
“Sitting quietly and practice being in the presence of God”.**

### **Other suggestions (Pg. 87 2 Para.)**

- 1) Ask friends or wives to join us in Morning Meditation**
  - 2) Select and memorize a few set prayers that emphasize these principles like the Serenity Prayer and the Lord's Prayer.**
  - 3) Read one of the many helpful meditation books.**
-

The Twelve Nightly Questions (Pg. 86 1 Para. Lines 2-14)

1) Was I resentful?

2) Was I selfish (self-seeking)?

3) Was I dishonest?

4) Was I afraid?

5) Do I owe an apology?

6) Have I kept a secret?

7) Was I unkind (i.e. cruel, harsh)?

8) Was I unloving (i.e. cold, unresponsive, indifferent)?

9) What could I have done better?

10) Was I thinking of myself most of the time?

11) Was I thinking of what I could do for others?

12) Was I thinking what I could pack into the stream of life?

**What Corrective measures should be taken Now?**

**12 Step Prayer:**

Dear God, Having had a spiritual experience, I must now remember that "faith without works is dead. Please help me to carry this message to other alcoholics! Provide me with the guidance and wisdom to talk with another alcoholic, because I can help when no one else can. I pray most humbly to continue walking day by day on the path of spiritual progress. I pray for the inner strength & wisdom to practice the principles of this way of life in all I do & say. I need You, my friends & the program every hour of every day. This is a better way to live. Amen  
(Pgs. 89-103)

**\*Conclude with a prayer:**

God, Please show me all through the day what my next step is to be, and give me whatever I need to take care of each task. Please free me from self-will and show me how I may be of service to You and others. Amen  
(Pg. 87 1 Para. Lines 1-6)

**\*In thinking about the day:**

God, Please give me Inspiration, an intuitive Thought or decision. Help Me to relax, take it easy And not struggle. Amen (Pg. 86 3 Para. Lines 1-5)

**\*When agitated:**

God, Please guide my Thoughts and my actions today. I am no longer running the show. Thy will not mine be done. Amen  
(Pg. 87 3 Para. Lines 1-3)

**\*When we retire at night:**

God, help me to constructively review my day. Where was I *resentful, selfish, dishonest Or afraid? 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 toward 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? Please forgive me for harms and wrongs today and let me know corrective measures I should take. Amen

**BIG BOOK EXPERIENCE QUESTIONARE.**

**PLEASE TAKE A FEW MOMENTS TO FILL OUT**

**1) Did you find this workshop to be beneficial to your program of recovery?**

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**2) What did you like about this workshop?**

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**3) Was there anything you didn't like about this workshop?**

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**4) Was the date, time and location good for you?**

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**5) Do you have any suggestions that may improve this workshop?**

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**6) Would you attend this "Big Book Experience" workshop again?**

\_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

**Length of sobriety?**

\_\_\_\_\_YRS\_\_\_\_\_MONTHS\_\_\_\_\_WKS\_\_\_\_\_DAYS