

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

Principle	Theme	Action	Defect	Result
Integrity Truth	Own our defects	Confession	Fear and isolation	Relief; Humility; Nearness of HP

Purpose	Process	Experience	Result	Promise
Confess to another person the obstacles to our desired relationship with God.	Read step four inventory to someone, thoroughly revealing our shady behavior, our selfish motives and our darkest secrets.	Relief	Feel hope based on complete self-revelation- an ability to look God in the face and accept compassion and forgiveness.	Beginning to have a spiritual experience to know God better.

Reread: Big Book (pp. 58-60)

Read: Big Book (pp. 72-75)

Step Five requires us to:

- a. admit (an action)
- b. to God (our Higher Power)
to ourselves (to our own mind/heart/innermost self)
to another human being (carefully selected)
- c. the exact nature (the pattern of character)
- d. of our wrongs (basically –what we learned about ourselves in Step Four)

The exact nature of our wrongs, when we have fearlessly exposed them, must then be expressed to God, ourselves and another person. Although we have admitted the exact nature of our wrongs to ourselves and God, the process of clearing away the wreckage of the past is not complete until we have shared these wrongs with another human being. It is only when we include another person in this healing process that we are able to become aware of our own self-delusion. The other person, if carefully chosen, will show us where we have not been totally honest in the digging out of our wrongs. We must be candid, to the best of our ability, with this person and lay out all our wrongs that we are aware of.

We take Step Five in order to:

- Develop our relationship with God (p. 72)
- To avoid relapse (pp. 72-73)
- To practice humility, fearlessness and honesty (p. 73)

(72:1) Having made our personal inventory, what shall we do about it? We have been trying to get a new attitude, a new relationship with our Creator, and to discover the **obstacles** in our path. We have admitted certain **defects**; we have ascertained in a **rough way** what the trouble is; we have put our finger on the weak items in our personal inventory. Now these are about to be cast out. This requires action on our part, which, when completed, will mean that we have

admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the **exact nature** of our **defects**. This brings us to the Fifth Step in the program of recovery mentioned in the preceding chapter.

Obstacles are things in your way

Defects are your Grosser Handicaps; Resentment, Fear, Dishonesty and Selfishness

Rough way is in a general way

Exact nature is basic characteristic

WHY DO STEP 5

(72:2) This is perhaps difficult -especially discussing our defects with another person. We think we have done well enough in admitting these things to ourselves. There is doubt about that. In actual practice, we usually find a solitary self-appraisal insufficient. Many of us thought it necessary to go much further. We will be more reconciled to discussing ourselves with another person when we see good reasons why we should do so. The best reason first: **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.

(73:0) 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.

(73:1) More than most people, the alcoholic leads a double life. He is very much the actor. To the outer world he presents his stage character. This is the one he likes his fellows to see. He wants to enjoy a certain reputation, but knows in his heart he doesn't deserve it.

(73:2) The inconsistency is made worse by the things he does on his sprees. Coming to his senses, he is revolted at certain episodes he vaguely remembers. These memories are a nightmare. He trembles to think someone might have observed him. As fast as he can, he pushes these memories far inside himself. He hopes they will never see the light of day. He is under constant fear and tension -that makes for more drinking.

(73:3) Psychologists are inclined to agree with us. We have spent thousands of dollars for examinations. We know but few instances where we have given these doctors a fair break. We have seldom told them the whole truth nor have we followed their advice. Unwilling to be honest with these sympathetic men, we were honest with no one else. Small wonder many in the medical profession have a low opinion of alcoholics and their chance for recovery!

What should we be looking for in the person who will hear our Fifth Step? (pp. 74-75)

(73:4) We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world. Rightly and naturally, we think well before we choose the person or persons with whom to take this intimate and confidential step. Those of us belonging to a religious denomination which requires confession must, and of course, will want to go to the properly appointed authority whose duty it is to receive it. Though we have no religious connection, we may still do well to talk with someone ordained by an established religion. We often find such a person quick to see and understand our problem. Of course, we sometimes encounter people who do not understand alcoholics.

(74:1) If we cannot or would rather not do this, we search our acquaintance for a close-mouthed, understanding friend. Perhaps our doctor or psychologist will be the person. It may be one of our own family, but we cannot disclose anything to our wives or our parents which will hurt them and make them unhappy. We have no right to save our own skin at another person's expense. Such parts of our story we tell to someone who will understand, yet be unaffected. The rule is we must be hard on ourself, but always considerate of others.

WHEN TO DO STEP 5 BB Pg 74 – "...at the **first opportunity**."

(75:1) **When we decide who is to hear our story, we waste no time.** We have a 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. Most people approached in this way will be glad to help; they will be honored by our confidence.

5th STEP PROMISES

(75:2) We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past. 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.

Having completed the above parts of Step Five, we now (p. 75)

- Read over the Fifth Step promises
- Review our progress to this point
- Move on to Steps Six and Seven (p. 76)

STEP 5 ½

(75:3) Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done. We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better. Taking this book down from our shelf we turn to the page which contains the twelve steps.

Carefully reading the first five proposals 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 we tried to make mortar without sand?

(164:3) Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

Step Five is a good example of the need for a balanced approach to recovery. If you have taken a deeply honest Fourth Step with both God and yourself (the two primary relationships most in need of healing), the Fifth Step interview need not be either difficult or protracted. Pray first. Next, speak from the heart.

After completing Step Five, many benefits will be ready for us if we have done a thorough and honest job. Our ability to remain sober/clean will be increased. Step Five is part of the footwork

that allows the grace of God to enter us and expel the acquired destructive obsessions. No longer will we feel that terrible sense of isolation. The willingness to forgive, not ourselves but also other people, will be enhanced. This healing tranquility will be a greater awareness of the presence of God within our lives.

At the completion of Step Five, it is suggested that:

A. We remain quiet for an hour and carefully review what we have done in working and living Steps One through Five.

B. We thank God that we know Him better.

C. We carefully reread Steps one through Five and ask ourselves if we have omitted anything.

After taking step 5 honestly and completely, you will be pleased:

1. You will see yourself as equal to others. No more and no less.
2. You will be at peace when you are alone.
3. Your fears will leave you.
4. You will feel close to God.
5. You will begin to awaken spiritually.
6. You will feel that your problem is solved.
7. You will experience God leading you.
8. This work will set you free.
9. Prayer: We thank god from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better.

Step 5 Written Inventory: The written step 5 inventory is very similar to the **Assets** and **Liabilities** Step 4 **Inventory** of the B2B:

(13:3) 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.

As you see below, admitting *the exact nature of our wrongs* means: we list and identify our character defects and the people we affected. We ask ourselves: “how have my character defects manifested and controlled my actions and/or reactions in life?”

This is precisely what we did in the B2B for steps 4 & 5. A careful reading of step 5 in the AA BB mirrors exactly how we did steps 4 & 5 in the B2B. It does *not* reflect a step 4 inventory using the 5 columns that appears on page 65 in the AA BB.

Admitting the exact nature of my wrongs:

Going over the list, we ask ourselves:

Am I identifying *the exact nature* of my wrongs, that is, what is behind my alcoholism and the reasons I acted out in the ways I did?

Have we honestly admitted our defects to ourselves and how they manifested in our lives and created the unmanageability?

Am I listing all those behaviors and parts of myself that I had vowed would *never see the light of day?* (73: 2)

Are we now willing to share them with another and with God?

Are we willing to *go to any length* to get rid of these same defects that caused our life to be unmanageable?

What character defects were revealed to you through your inventory?

Are you willing to have them removed?

As you share your inventory, there should be 3 lists, written by either the sponsor or the sponsee:

1. The first will be a list of your **defects of character**. If you like, use the list on the next page by checking off the character defects that apply to you. This list will guide steps 6 and 7.
2. You should also have a preliminary list of **persons you have harmed** for step 8 (This will be a combination of the sexual injury [4d] and persons you have harmed lists [4e] from step 4.). **Amends/Restitution**
3. Retrieve a list of the names of the **persons you still resent**. You will probably find it necessary to **forgive** them in order for the resentment to be removed.

My Moral Inventory Checklist

Self-will (Column 4) (NO POWER)	God's will (Column 5) Steps 8 & 9(POWER!)
My liabilities, blocks, character defects...	The assets I need to strive for...
False Pride, Arrogance, Self-loathing	Humility
Jealousy, Distrust, Suspicion	Trust
Envy	Contentment
Selfishness	Unselfishness
Self-seeking	Helpfulness to others
Dishonesty, Stealing, Lying	Honesty, Integrity, Restitution
Intolerance, Inconsideration	Tolerance, Acceptance, Tact
Greed	Generosity
Fear of...	Love
Lust, Infidelity	Intimacy, Fidelity, Faithfulness
Irresponsibility, Blaming Others	Responsibility, Accountability
Hate, Anger, Resentment	Forgiveness
Sloth, Laziness, Procrastination	Activity, Zeal, Promptness
Impatience	Patience

With respect to all harms:

1. List of people I have harmed that I compiled in Step 4.
2. I list what I did.
3. I list and discuss with my sponsor what an amends might look like.
I do not yet concern myself with whether or not I should, or will be able to, actually make the amends.)

All persons harmed.

What I did.

What amends might be.

Based on the information above:

We list our resentments: We forgive in order to remove resentment.

We list our defects: strive to turn them into assets.

Share our fears: strive to become faithful: how would God have me be?

Harms: Amends

Exactly like the B2B!