

# FOURTH STEP INVENTORY

## Introduction to the 4th Step Inventory Workshop

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE 12 STEPS?

1. To help us discover and establish a conscious relationship with a Power greater than ourselves.
2. To help us improve our conscious relationship with a Power greater than ourselves.
3. To produce the personality change necessary for our recovery.
4. To provide a design for living - that can help us be happy, comfortable, and at ease, living an enjoyable life of purpose, with peace and harmony with ourselves, with others, and with God *as we understand Him*, growing in understanding and effectiveness, serving and helping others - without the use of alcohol or other drugs.

The precise instructions for taking the 12 Steps is contained in the book, Alcoholics Anonymous.

“To show other alcoholics *precisely how we have recovered* is the main purpose of this book.”

-- *From the Forward to the First Edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous*

There is much more to life than being physically sober. There is much more to sobriety than having the obsession for alcohol removed. Sober isn't much fun - unless we can learn to be happy and sober. To be happy and sober requires emotional sobriety. The Fourth Step is our first action step towards physical and emotional sobriety.

We are in a process to recreate our lives. We made a decision to give up *our old plans for living* and to try A.A.'s 12 Step Plan for Living. The Fourth Step is our first action step. It is here that we know whether or not we really took Steps 1, 2 and 3.

Step Four is a fact-finding and fact-facing process. We are searching for “causes and conditions.” We want to uncover the truth about ourselves. We want to discover the attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, fears, actions, behaviors, and the behavior patterns - that have been blocking us, causing us problems and causing our failure. We want to learn the exact nature our “character defects” and what causes us to do the unacceptable things we do - so that once they are removed - we can acquire and live with new attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, actions and behaviors for our highest good, and for the highest good of those with whom we come in contact. This prepares us to live a life of purpose - where we can be in maximum fit condition to be of service to others. And, by taking inventory and learning the exact nature of our wrongs - we will be able to recognize when we might be slipping into our old way of life - and headed for new problems, and possibly relapse.

If you doubt that you have any problems -- just think back to the last time that you felt restless, irritable and discontented. Remember when you got angry - with your self or with another person. Remember the last time you were disturbed. Remember the last time you had a problem or troubles. The last time you felt uncomfortable and not at ease in a situation. What was it? Whom was it with? What happened?

Everything contained in the Fourth Step Inventory Worksheets is directly from the book - Alcoholics Anonymous. The worksheets were created by using the precise instructions in the Big Book to make taking the Fourth Step as easy and simple as possible. All page numbers in this Fourth Step Inventory Workshop, refer to the third edition of the book - Alcoholics Anonymous. If you are using the fourth edition -- make sure you are on the correct page.

## FOURTH STEP INVENTORY INSTRUCTIONS

Note: I suggest that you take this step with a qualified sponsor. A qualified sponsor – is someone who has taken ALL 12 Steps precisely following the directions as they are defined and described in the Big Book – Alcoholics Anonymous. **IT IS NOT ADVISABLE TO DO THIS STEP ALONE.** Be sure your Sponsor is present and leading you through this Step as you take it. (That's one of the reasons that we have sponsors! And, it is your sponsors job to lead you through this Step)

1. Be sure that you have taken Steps One, Two and Three.
3. If you are using the forms that I provided to you, or if you're not using the forms, remember: The columns go from TOP to BOTTOM. Not straight across. Example: Column 1, (left column) list all the names, people, principles, things, etcetera, that go in this first column, top to bottom. DO NOT move to the second column until column 1 is complete. Then, when you do column 2, go top to bottom, not straight across, until you have completed column 2. Do the same with each successive column. Top to Bottom. Not straight across
4. Read page 58 through 63 of the Big Book (up to the last paragraph). Note each place you see the word "self" and "selves" and the compounds of those words. (Example "self-seeking, self-reliance" etcetera).
5. There are four parts to your Inventory. They are to be taken in the precise order as numbered below:
  1. Resentments
  2. Fears
  3. Sex Conduct
  4. Harms To Others
6. Now, read page 63 (starting with the last paragraph) - through page 71 of the Big Book.
7. Complete the four different Inventory sheets that have been provided to you. Follow the instructions on each of the sheets. Use additional copies of the sheets when necessary. DO NOT complete the columns left to right -- they should be completed from TOP to BOTTOM in each column, before going to the next column.
8. Refer to the "Prompt Sheets" to jog your memory -- if you get stuck.
9. Ask questions if you are unsure of anything! Prepare for a long talk with your sponsor.
10. In this Fourth Step Inventory we are searching for our grosser handicaps. Personal inventories will become part of a life-long process. Later, in our Tenth Step Inventories, our objectives are not only to keep our "house clean and in order" -- correcting mistakes and errors when they occur -- but also to grow in understanding and effectiveness. At that point many of us find it interesting to discover in greater depth a knowledge and understanding of ourselves, our instincts, impulses and drives. In our Daily 10th & 11th Steps, we will begin to look at the "Assets and Liabilities" in our lives which will provide a simple "Design for Living" that we'll use to "Recreate our lives."

Naturally, there will come to mind additional things that you will feel that you should have included in your Fourth Step, that were left out. Don't worry about it. If you take these Steps as they have been layed out, and you have been thorough to the best of your ability at the time that you took them -- you will have plenty of time later on to revisit the Fourth Step, using the 10th Step Inventories. And, you'll be able to do it SOBER!!!

You are learning to use our "Spiritual Tools" for the first time. You will use them daily (hopefully) for the rest of your life..... as you trudge the road of happy destiny, with a new peace, serenity, attitude, and new outlook on life!

#### 4th Step Notes, Definitions and Instructions -- continued.

**Self Esteem** - How I think of myself

**Pride** - How I think others view me

**Pocketbook** - Basic desire for money, property, possessions, etc.

**Personal Relations** - Our relations with other people.

**Emotional Security** - General sense of emotional well being

**Sex Relations** - Basic drive for sexual intimacy

**Selfish, self-centered, egotistical** - "It's about me!"

**Ambitions** - Our goals, plans and designs for the future. Ambition deals with the things that *we want*. In examining our ambitions we notice that we have the following types:

**Emotional ambitions.** Our ambitions for Emotional Security. Our "feelings".

**Material ambitions** - Our ambitions for "Our pocketbook." Our ambitions towards physical and financial well-being.

**Social ambitions** - Our "place or position in the herd." Our ambitions of how others view us. Our ambitions towards what people think about us.

**Sexual ambitions** - Refers to ambitions for sex relations. Does this really need a definition?

**FOURTH STEP INVENTORY: RESENTMENTS**

Read from bottom of page 63 through 65 of the Big Book before beginning.

1. Column 1: Page 64: "In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper. We listed people, institutions or principles with whom we were angry." (Complete column 1 from top to bottom. Do nothing with column 2,3,4 until column 1 has been completed.
2. Column 2: Page 64: "We asked ourselves why we were angry." (Complete column 2 from top to bottom. Do nothing with column 3 & 4 until column 2 has been completed.
3. Column 3: Page 65: "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? " (Complete each column within column 3 from top to bottom. Starting with Self-Esteem and finishing with Sex Relations. Do nothing with column 4 until column 3 has been completed).
4. Column 4: Page 67: "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."

I'm resentful at:	The Cause	What part of self was hurt or threatened?						Where was I to blame?								
List the names of people Institutions or principles with whom we were angry.	Why am I angry?	Self Esteem	Pride	Emotional Security	Pocketbook	Ambitions	Personal Relations	Sex Relations	Selfish	Dishonest	Self-seeking	Frightened	Inconsiderate	The exact nature of my wrong. Be specific.		

**FOURTH STEP INVENTORY: FEARS**

Read from bottom of page 67 through 68 of the Big Book before beginning.

1. Column 1: Page 68: "We reviewed our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them." (Complete column 1 from top to bottom. Do nothing with column 2, 3, 4, 5, until column 1 has been completed.
2. Column 2: Page 68: "We asked ourselves why we had them." (Complete column 2 from top to bottom. Do nothing with column 3, 4, & 5, until column 2 has been completed.
3. Column 3: Page 68: "Wasn't it because self-reliance failed us? Self-reliance was good as far as it went, but it didn't go far enough. Some of us once had great self-confidence, but it didn't fully solve the fear problem, or any other. When it made us cocky, it was worse. " (Complete each column within column 3 from top to bottom. Do nothing with column 4 until column 3 has been completed).
4. Column 4: What part of self does the fear affect? (Complete each column within column 4.
5. Column 5: Page 68: "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.

What Am I Afraid Of?	Why do I have the fear?	Which Part of Self Have I Been Relying On Which Has Failed me?					What Part of Self Does The Fear Affect?					We ask for the fear to be removed			
List the names of people Institutions, principles or anything else that you fear.	Why am I afraid?	Self-reliance	Self-confidence	Self-discipline	Self-will		Self Esteem	Pride	Emotional Security	Pocketbook	Ambitions	Personal Relations	Sex Relations	<p>"Perhaps there is a better way- we think so. 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.</p> <p>We never apologize to anyone for depending upon our Creator. We can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. All men of faith have courage. They trust their God. We never apologize for God. Instead we let Him demonstrate, through us, what He can do. 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."</p> <p><b>Fear Prayer:</b> "God, please remove my fear of _____ and direct my attention towards what you would have me to be."</p>	

**FOURTH STEP INVENTORY: PEOPLE WE HAVE HARMED**

**BE SURE TO do this page just like the other inventory pages. One column at a time, top to bottom -- NOT straight across**

Big Book, page 70, paragraph 3 “We have listed the people we have hurt by our conduct, and are willing to straighten out the past if we can.”

Note 1: -- On those pages 58-63, you'll find examples of attitudes and defects that cause us to fail in our relationships and often fuel self-seeking conduct that harms others.

Note 2: “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.

.... 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.” Page 73 -- Alcoholics Anonymous

Who Did I Harm?	What did I do - or fail to do?	Which part of self caused the harm?											What is the nature of my wrongs, faults, mistakes, defects?						What should I have done instead?			
Who was harmed by my conduct?	What did I do - or, failed to do that 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	Selfish	Self-seeking	Dishonest	Inconsiderate	Frightend / Fear	Lack of Self-discipline / Self-control	Playing God - Trying to control others.	Self-centered-ego-centric		

