

**A
Guide
for
Working
The Steps
with
Alcoholics**

(in groups or one-on-one)

DISCLAIMER

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RATIONALE

This guide is not intended in any way to suggest that it be used in place of any AA-approved literature. Rather, it has been written after interviews in October of 1998 with a man with 63 years of sobriety who sobered up with Bill Wilson in 1934 and shared with us the way they guided people through the steps in the early days when their success rates for recovery were so much higher than typical rates today.

The guide also is based on information collected from people who were taken through the steps by Dr. Bob and by Clarence S. as well as from information shared by Clarence S. in interviews and face-to-face with a member of our home group.

This is not OUR way to guide people but is, as closely as our years of research have been able to learn, how THEY did it when the success rates were tremendous. We are not attempting to tell anyone how to do anything. This is written in response to requests from people who have recovered, and recovered quickly and miraculously, as a result of working the steps as outlined here. We urge all who are interested in helping others to use any information they find which has a record of success. In the beginning of working with others, you may want to use this guide one-on-one with another in the recovery process, each taking turns reading a page at a time and doing the steps together. Later, you might try it the way the founders did: taking large groups through in classes and workshops.

May God bless all your efforts to assist others who are suffering from any addiction that is separating them from God, from others, and from their true Self.

SESSION ONE (May want to break after 3rd or 5th, depending on time)

Bill Wilson said once on a tape that the teaching and the practice of the Twelve Steps is the only purpose of any recovery group, so the original fellowship offered classes to teach people the Twelve Steps. They enjoyed a 75-95% success rate originally as opposed to a reported 5-10% success rate today. Throughout the 1940's to the 1960's, hundreds of thousands of alcoholics found the solution to alcoholism, as well as a new way to live, in classes. In an effort to get the kind of success rates that the founders enjoyed, we are doing it the way it was originally done, so let's get started.

Our journey through the steps is interactive, so we are going to ask some questions and we'd like you to answer them out loud. First, who has been the boss....honestly? You, or alcohol and alcoholism? Do you want to find a design for living that is better than what you've had in the past? To what length are you willing to go to get a new and better life?

The people who go back out and drink are usually the ones who stop either after Step Three or after Step Eight, so are you willing to take all twelve steps that this program requires for successful completion? How soon do you want to get better? Then let's look at the three types of drinkers and see which type you are. Two types of drinkers are moderate and hard drinkers, and both can quit if they have a good reason. Only two things make one the third type, which is the real alcoholic: we lost choice and we lost control. Did you ever say you were going to quit, tried to quit, but didn't? Did you ever say you were going to drink but were going to control the amount you drank, but failed? We are real alcoholics based only on two things: 1. we cannot stop permanently on our own, as can the moderate and hard drinkers, and 2. we cannot control the amount we drink, once we take a drink. So, do you concede to your innermost self that you are not a moderate or hard drinker but that you are a real alcoholic?

There is a need to work the steps if your life has any of the 8 traits of untreated alcoholism, otherwise known as the "8 traits of an unmanageable life." See how many of these you have by answering as we read them:

1. Had trouble in personal relationships (including with ourselves)
 2. couldn't control our emotional natures (ever have up and down days?) 3. we were a prey to misery and depression 4. We couldn't make a living--a decent life 5. we felt useless 6. we were full of fear--we worried a lot 7. we were unhappy 8. We couldn't be of real help to other people. So you have one or more of those? Then it's time to work the steps.

STEP ONE has two parts. It says: **We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol--that our lives had become unmanageable.** "Powerless" over alcohol means we have less power over alcohol than those who can control the amount they drink. We'll explain why in a moment. An "unmanageable life" means that life is crazy or that we don't feel happy, joyous, or free. We do crazy things when we're drinking, but we do crazy things when we're not drinking, too. Do you agree that a crazy, unhappy life is a poorly managed life? Do you want to find out how to change that?

Alcoholism is a two-fold disease, made up of an allergy of the body and an obsession of the mind. The first part is physical. We are powerless over alcohol physically. Why?

Who is allergic to a food or a medicine or can name something they hate to eat? What effect does it have on you? And you've never had any ____ since finding out the effect? What effect did alcohol have on you at the end of your drinking experience? So you can control ____ because it does this ____, but you can't do the same with alcohol. Here's why.

There is something doctors call "the phenomenon of craving." One component alcohol breaks down into is acetate, a chemical passed on through the liver and pancreas that creates craving for another drink. In 88% of the population, it passes on quickly. Alcoholics have a liver and a pancreas that function at 1/3 to 1/10 the normal rate, varying as we get older. Because the liver and pancreas of an alcoholic function slower, the acetate stays in us, creating a craving for another drink. We have another. Now we have two times the craving. Then we take a third and we have a craving three times stronger than any normal drinker can experience. We cannot stop after our allergy kicks in. Have you ever experienced the phenomenon of craving? Then do you concede to your innermost self that this allergy, this phenomenon of craving, makes you physically powerless over alcohol and that you cannot ever change that physical allergy?

Next, the second part of our disease is mental. In fact, our literature says it is the “main problem.” Specifically, it says: “...the main problem of the alcoholic centers in [the] mind, rather than in [the] body.”

You have an effective mental defense against ____ . You don't consume it. But you keep going back to alcohol, even having experienced many negative effects. Know why? All people have two parts to their minds: the conscious part--which determines what we SAY, and the subconscious part--which determines what we really DO and how we FEEL. For example, with our conscious minds we'd say “I'll never do that again,” but we did, because of what's in the subconscious mind and the fact that the subconscious mind influences us more than the conscious mind. One of our members, when a child, suffered 26 wasp stings to the head. Today, in his 50's, if a fly buzzes by his ear, he jumps. Is it normal to jump if a fly goes by? NO. Does he understand why he jumps? YES. Because somewhere in his subconscious mind is a record of the pain he suffered 5 decades earlier. But even understanding that does not stop his abnormal reaction.

Please consider this: What is in your subconscious mind? None of us have a clue, do we? But the professionals in the field tell us that stored in the subconscious mind is a memory of everything that we have ever seen, felt, observed, or experienced. The conscious mind cannot recall all that, but it's there. And it influences every idea, emotion and attitude we have. And THOSE, not our conscious minds, determine how we really think, feel, and believe and ultimately what we DO. If we are to stop being self-destructive and reacting by drinking to those things in our subconscious minds that make us restless, irritable, and discontented, we have to bypass all the subconscious stimuli that make us FEEL as we feel and then DO what we do, even when it makes no sense.

So let's review, because this is the MAIN problem: there are things in the subconscious part of your mind that you don't even know are there but that really make you do what you do, think the way you think, believe the things you believe and feel the way you feel. We say, using our conscious minds, that we'll quit, but the subconscious mind has a record of times when we were restless, irritated, discontent, or bored and we drank and it gave us ease and comfort. Later, it quit working, but that message remained in the

subconscious brain even as our conscious minds were telling us, “I really have to stop doing this--I’m destroying myself.”

So even as we repeatedly failed to get the positive results we sought, trying over and over unsuccessfully to recapture a former experience, the alcoholic subconscious mind kept telling us a lie: that it will be different this time; that we will enjoy it this time; that we can control it this time. We believe lies. It is insane to believe lies. As with the fly, it is insane to react to illusions and not be able to see the truth. Can you admit to your innermost self that you have done things in the past that were insane? Can you admit to your innermost self that, even recently, you have made some decisions that were not in your best interest--things, for example, that are unhealthy to your body, physically? Is it sane to do things that are unhealthy to our body, or our peace of mind, or our emotions?

STEP TWO says: **“Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”** The insanity referenced in Step Two is just that: believing lies and letting them result in unmanageable, miserable lives. Not being able to see truth and then act on it. We hated the thought that someone might accuse us of acting crazy at times--drunk or not drunk--but then the literature tells us, “The first thing apparent was that this world and its people were often quite wrong.” That means, people, all people--not just alcoholics--often aren’t quite right! How many dollars would you have if you had been given a dollar for every time in your life that you observed someone who was nuts and you commented on it? Most alcoholics would be billionaires if that were the case. And we were right.

George Bernard Shaw said that the earth is the insane asylum for the universe. But we cannot do anything about the insanity of others. In fact, since we consciously say we are going to do one thing but then DO the opposite, we obviously can’t do anything about our own crazy behavior, either. We are each as powerless over our mind and our own body. THAT’S why we are totally powerless, hopeless, and insane over our two-part disease. We have a body that can’t take it and a mind that can’t leave it alone. Can you look at some of your past experiences and relate to that?

Step Two tells us that there is some power that other alcoholics before you--who were just like you--have found that made them stop believing lies such as “maybe real alcoholics can drink as normal drinkers some day.” That

power can restore us to sanity so that we can react sanely and normally to alcohol by not using it. And that happens “automatically,” we are told, by the time we work to Step Ten. We do not walk into a 7-11, see iced beer, and out of fear started causing a scene by yelling, “Of God--there it is!! Give me power!! Give me power now, God!!” No, the power manifests in the form of sanity within us so we see it and walk right on by. More importantly, that Power, which is the wisdom of God, can guide us through the day, away from insane behavior to sane, non-self-destructive behavior. For aren't the things discussed above the only reasons we lock people away in insane asylums? (1) they can't see truth--they believe lies, even the ones they tell themselves; and (2) because they are self-destructive and might hurt themselves and/or others.

Can you admit that you have done some things that are harmful to yourself, that were self-destructive? Do you think that is sane behavior? So can you concede to your innermost self that you have experienced the obsession of the alcoholic mind and that you are, therefore, mentally powerless over alcohol? Can you concede that your behavior has been harmful to yourself, if not others? Can you concede to your innermost self that, hey, that's pretty insane, all right?

Do you concede that an unmanageable life is an insane way to live and that you evidently need some power you haven't found so far to stop the physical craving, the mental obsessing, the unmanageable behavior, and the crazy behavior?

Now the Second Step question is one that only an egotistical, real alcoholic would even have to think about: Do you concede to your innermost self that there is some power greater than you? Are you willing to try to tap into that Power that saved us from ourselves in order to quit doing crazy things and to come up with a new design for living that will result in a happy, manageable life?

Then you have completed Steps One and Two. Now, in Step Three we are told this: **Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God.** (Please note: we are not turning our will or our lives over to the care of a light bulb, a tree, or a telephone pole. Some have said that the God of their understanding is a group or even a tree named George. Have no doubt about it--if someone is turning his life over to the care of a tree named

George, he has a mental problem that is greater than any we have experienced around our disease of alcoholism! And some of us have seen a lot of gatherings of groups, but we have yet to find one that we would want to turn our will or our lives over to for management, no offense!)

So, we get the name of the power we're gonna seek: God. That bothers some who were raised with a negative concept of God, but we are told that we must find a new, positive conception of God. Many of us came in with the idea that God is angry, record-keeping, dogmatic, mean, and punishing. The God of our new conception is One Who is kind, forgiving, there for us, and a God of mercy, not an angry God of justice. And the Power is just the power to quit doing insane, self-destructive things.

Is there anyone in this room who would not like to seek such a power that can make her or him behave more sanely and in less of a self-destructive fashion? (Pause- answer "Good"--or--"Why not" if you had a negative answer.)

The opposite of self-destructive and insane living is called "spiritual living," because one definition of a spiritual person is "a person who has clear and right and logical thinking." So, we are going to have to discuss something we call "spiritual living," which is just a sane way of living. (For example, some of us stopped having unprotected sex after we were restored to sanity. We didn't make that change in our behavior because we came in here and turned into fanatical saints. We stopped that behavior because it was self-destructive. We were taking a chance on killing ourselves. That was insane. We avoid self-destructive behaviors today, not because our conscious minds tell us to and not because we have power, and not because we are saints. We don't do self-destructive things anymore because the spiritual life we lead is just a SANE life! Now that makes it rather easy to work these steps, huh?)

But before we discuss spiritual, or sane, living, we'd like to clear up a few more misconceptions about what spiritual living is about. First, it is not about living a religious life, though we don't fight with religious people. Most importantly, we are told this: "We are convinced that a spiritual mode of living is a most powerful health restorative." Who would not like to have their health improved?

The book continues there: “We, who have recovered from serious drinking, are miracles of MENTAL health.” We are not miracles of Spiritual health. In fact, our spirits, made by God, are the only perfect part we have.

So from those readings in the book, we see that this deal is about recovery from a disease; about recovering physically by not drinking a substance that destroys our liver and pancreas and other body parts, and about recovering mentally--recovering our mental health--so we can avoid doing the crazy things we did in the past. Are any here who does not think that their mental health can stand improvement?

We are told: “We have found nothing incompatible between a powerful spiritual experience and a life of sane and happy usefulness.” Therefore, we can conclude that there is much that **is** compatible between a powerful spiritual experience and a sane and happy life. Ww are NOT trying to turn anyone into a saint prematurely. In fact, we proclaim that we are not, and never shall be, saints in this lifetime. But we haven’t had the degree of stability in life we’d like, thus we suffered from unmanageability, and we’re told we’re “...spiritually-minded persons (that is, ‘sane people’) . . . were demonstrating a degree of stability, happiness, and usefulness which we should have sought ourselves.” See, it was never intended that we get through this crazy world on our own power and directions. For 4.5 million years before the first university ever came along, mankind made it quite find by living with the innate internal guidance system given to all humans. This system for receiving proper directions is within each of us as a gift. It really makes life simple. We need but exercise the intuitive “muscles” to get the direction now as well as every moment of every day.

We’re told that--drunk or not drunk--if we are not managing our lives well and can’t meet happily the conditions of daily life, we still have an alcoholic mind and we are using it rather than the internal guidance system we were given. Why? It tells us: because “there is something the matter with [our] spiritual status.” So spiritual status is about our minds, not our desire to become perfect and not about living a glum life. And we are told too that as long as we have an alcoholic mind, the time and place will come that we will drink again. We either get sane or get drunk. We either get guidance or we get drunk. We either start bypassing the subconscious mind and start picking up on what we haven’t been getting through the internal guidance system, or we live the same miserable lives we’ve lived as we have been driven by all the things in the subconscious mind that make us do insane, destructive things.

We're told that God, through people working the steps, has released thousands of alcoholics from mental institutions. So doing this work can restore sanity, if we do our daily exercises, to give us the promised daily reprieve from the effects of this disease which we were told centers mainly in the mind. We have a daily reprieve from the mental ramifications of our disease, of the dis-ease that is typical in everyone who is living in this world. We're told that there are only two groups that do not recover their sanity and their physical health:

(1) those who are so stubbornly self-destructive that they refuse to follow the 200 words, the 12-steps--they never recover; and (2) those who cannot be honest with themselves. They are in delusion and cannot see a different view of the ways things are. When we encourage them to see their part in past problems, for example, they cannot see their part. EVERYONE else in the past has been able to have a set of spiritual experiences and come to a spiritual awakening--because our Spirits have been asleep, unconscious of guidance. That results when we work all 12 steps, and the program of recovery only fails with the few who are already too crazy, too far gone mentally. There are a few of those unfortunates, we're told. EVERYONE else can do this, even, our book says, if you are agnostic. Why? Because even agnostics can become sane if they get in touch with what our book calls the "Universal Mind." Let's talk about that.

Contrary to some beliefs, we do not have sick Spirits. The "spiritual malady" is more like a muscle that has shrunk and grown useless from not being used. Each of us has a Spirit or Soul or Universal Mind inside to guide us sanely through life. We wouldn't send a child to the store for bread without the guidance of how to get to the store, and God did not send us here to navigate this world without such automatic guidance. But just as an unused muscle weakens completely, so did our internal guidance system. The steps give us a method for tapping into that internal, subconscious, intuitive guidance that we have been ignoring. Ignoring it, not seeking it in the peace and quiet and stillness, left us to use our conscious minds to try to get through life, and our experience proves that doesn't work for anyone. Why? **Because we can't do what the conscious mind says we're going to do.** Thus we see all the insanity, not just among alcoholics, but among our society as a whole. But today, we don't judge others' insanity or get angry about it. We simply observe it, so we can remain vigilant about seeking out our own self-destructive behaviors that return when self-will returns to guide

us, rather than allowing us to be guided by the will of the Universal Mind, which some of us call “God.” Because one Will drives us to happiness, joy, and peace, while the other Will drives us to the gates of insanity or death, let’s talk about Wills.

There are some words left out in the 3rd Step that we have to insert. What it really says, when we insert the understood words is (WE) Made a decision to turn our (SELF) will and our (UNMANAGEABLE) lives over to the care of God. So the real problem is that we have been living a life run on self-will (that is, the will to self-destruct) instead of God’s will (that is, God’s sane Will that we be protected, happy, joyous, and free). Those 8 traits are really the “8 traits of a poorly managed life because it’s being run on our self-(destructive)-will.” (Forget free will--we proved we have none of that when we got up in the morning and our conscious minds said we’d never do that again but we went and did it again anyway.) So how do lives run on “God’s Will to protect” differ from lives run on our self-destructive-will? Here's how:

GOD’S PROTECTIVE WILL EGO/SELF-

SAYS:

1. “HARM NO ONE”
2. “BE HUMBLE”
3. “LET ME BE THE JUDGE”
4. “LET ME BE IN CONTROL,
IN CHARGE”
5. “LOVE ALL” (MEANING
EVERYONE AND
EVERYTHING)
6. “SERVE ALL”
7. “BE STILL”
8. “YOU ALREADY HAVE
EVERYTHING YOU NEED”
9. “I WILL GUIDE YOU--
FOLLOW MY GUIDANCE”
10. “I WILL PROVIDE FOR
YOU”
11. “I WILL CHANGE YOU”
12. “I KNOW EVERYTHING---
YOU NEED KNOW NOTHING
BUT MY DIRECTIONS”

OUR

DESTRUCTIVE

WILL SAYS:

1. “HARM PEOPLE BY LOWERING
THEM TO MY LEVEL”
2. “FEEL IMPORTANT”
3. “CRITICIZE AND JUDGE ALL”
4. LET ME CONTROL EVERYONE
AND EVERYTHING”
5. “FEAR ALL--ASSUME A DEFENSIVE
POSTURE--BETTER YET--ASSUME AN
OFFENSIVE POSTURE”
6. “USE ALL”
7. “GO...DO...ZOOM”
8. “YOU DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH OF
ANYTHING, AND YOU NEVER WILL”
9. “I WANT TO GUIDE YOU--FOLLOW
MY GUIDANCE”
10. “I WILL PROVIDE FOR MYSELF--YET
I REALLY DON’T THINK I CAN”
11. “I HATE CHANGE”
12. “I NEED TO KNOW EVERYTHING,
AND I NEED TO KNOW IT
RIGHT NOW”

Since there’s only self-will or God’s Will to drive us, which of those two would you think was driving us when we were acting insanely? (Pause)

So self-will/ego/fear--which are all the same--are really just insanity. God's Will, therefore, is sanity. So, we have inside a perfect Spirit or Soul or Universal Mind, which some call "God's Will or The Will of the Universe," that is our internal guidance system. We also have an external guidance system--one created by the values of well-meaning parents, preachers, teachers, other adults, our society and culture in general--that has been set into our subconscious minds over the length of our lifetimes. That guidance system which is not ours really but has been imposed on our subconscious minds makes us DO things and FEEL ways that we don't want. That is called "self-will." Because our society is a "can't ever get enough" kind of society, that message is in our subconscious minds. That is why the self-will can never be happy. Many past experiences and messages made us think that we were not enough. That is why we are driven to get more and more of everything. We are trained to believe in the "Principle of Scarcity" that since we'll never have enough, or be enough, we better get all we can. But there is never enough, of anything, as far as the subconscious, self-will is concerned. See why we are in trouble if we want to do things our way and still be satisfied and happy?

God's Will heals; self-will kills. God's Will is to construct; self-will is to self-destruction. God's Will leads to happiness, joy, and freedom; self-will leads to self-destruction. Knowing that, and that seeking God's Will is spiritual living, and knowing that spiritual living is just sane, non-self-destructive living, it becomes a simple matter now as to which Will we should let guide us through life. In fact, we have no choice.

Therefore, in taking Step Three, all you are admitting is three things: 1. you've tried to manage alone and it's not working, 2. you're turning over the unmanageable part of your life to a new manager, and 3. that you are making a decision--the decision being to do Steps 4-12 since they are what get us out of self-will and allow God to manage. So, the Third Step question is this: are you willing to do Steps 4-12 to seek new management that will rid you of ego; rid you of insane, destructive behavior; and rid you of your unmanageable life? Then you have done Step Three, so we'll affirm that decision with a prayer. Before we do, we invite you to relax and to close your eyes in order to visualize this God of our new conception, standing 40' tall. We have our arms around God's calf, and God's hand is resting on our shoulder as God says: "My child, from now on I'm going to manage your life so that you can experience peace and sanity, whether you are in pain or in

pleasure. We'll handle it all together. I will not abandon you. I never did. I just left you alone until you decided to call on Me. Now that you have been insanely self-destructive long enough, My Child, I say that you have hurt yourself and others long enough, so I will stop you from ever picking up again the things that brought about so much pain. I forgive you. I love you--even as you stumble through life." And we answer: "God, we have seen that dry or drunk we don't have the power to change our bodies' allergies nor our mental obsessions. We see our troubles aren't from drinking alcohol but from trying to run the show ourselves, from trying to manage alone. And we can think of something worse than dying from alcoholism, namely living--living another 20, 30 or 40 years feeling the way we feel when drinking or when on a dry drunk--needing a new manager in our lives, but still wanting to manage ourselves. So as we go into the silence, help us imagine what life can be like for the rest of our lives, now that we are ready to seek a new design for living that is based on letting You be our new manager. [SILENCE] Now, in order to start immediately killing off the ego that has caused us so much trouble, we will perform an act of humility by saying the Third Step Prayer on our knees. We are going to hand you a copy of the original version of the Third Step Prayer as it was written before being condensed in the Big Book. (Hand out) Now, let's all read this together: (READ)

ORIGINAL THIRD STEP PRAYER

as Used by DR. BOB

Dear God,

I'm sorry about the mess I've made of my life. I want to turn away from all the wrong things I've ever done and all the wrong things I've ever been. Please forgive me for it all.

I know You have the power to change my life and can turn me into a winner. Thank You, God for getting my attention long enough to interest me in trying it Your way.

God, please take over the management of my life and everything about me. I am making this conscious decision to turn my will and my life over to Your care and am asking You to please take over all parts of my life.

Please, God, move into my heart. How ever You do it is Your business, but make Yourself real inside me and fill my awful emptiness. Fill me with your love and Holy Spirit and make me know Your will for me. And now, God, help Yourself to me and keep on doing it. I'm not sure I want You to, but do it anyhow.

I rejoice that I am now a part of Your people, that my uncertainty is gone forever, and that You now have

control of my will and my life. Thank You and praise Your name. Amen.

Great. You've completed Steps 1, 2, and 3 and we are ready to go to 4 and 5.

STEPS 4 & 5 with 6 & 7 Follow-up

If a business is failing, it needs new management. That's what we're looking for. And the first thing a new manager needs is for the two of you to take an inventory of assets and liabilities, to see what has been causing the trouble. Remember, we know alcohol was not causing our troubles, because many stop drinking alcohol but their lives remain miserable and unmanageable. So we have to find out what we have, what we need to keep, and what we need to get rid of. In the inventory, we are not looking for all our wrongs. Instead, we are looking for the **NATURE** of our wrongs, for the shortcomings that are causing us trouble.

Since we all have resentments or have been angry with people, we're going to give you a form now and ask that you write 4 names of people, institutions, or rules you've been most angry with and then list three things wrong with each. (Column One). For instance, we're given examples such as: the person is a gossip, unreasonable, unjust, overbearing, nagging. Other examples are dishonest, cold, manipulative, controlling, arrogant, etc. (Column Two) Then, complete the Column Three information and also list briefly some things you fear or worry about, such as economic fears, intimacy fears, abandonment fears, etc. Then complete the relationship portion.

*Lastly, before we begin, please notice that 4 and 5 are about a moral inventory while 10 is about a personal inventory. 4 and 5 are quick and to the point. We cannot recall at this point every wrong we ever did. We were in blackouts at times. We are looking for the **NATURE** of our wrongs, not each of our individual wrongs.*

Column One:
I resent or hold
a grudge against:

Column Two:
Three words that describe the
person, institution or rule are:

Column Three:
List here the ways those in Column One affected your:

1. Pride_____

2. Self-Esteem:_____

3. Ambitions:_____

4. Emotional Security:_____

5. Financial Security:_____

6. Sex Relations:_____

7. Personal Relations:_____

Some of the things I fear The opposite of that would
or worry about include: be:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Sexual conduct/relationships inventory

I was selfish with: _____ and _____ and _____.

I was dishonest with: _____ and _____ and _____.

I was inconsiderate with: _____ and _____ and _____.

I aroused jealousy with: _____ and _____ and _____.

I aroused suspicion with: _____ and _____ and _____.

I aroused bitterness with: _____ and _____ and _____.

Column Four:

In all these cases, where was I:

1. Selfish?

2. Self-Seeking?

3. Dishonest?

4. Fearful?

Allow a brief time. Then say:

Now, what you've written about others is probably quite true. The Book says it is apparent that the people of this world are often quite wrong. But, this isn't their inventory--it's yours.

[Discuss "psychological projection" = what we see and criticize in others is what we really hate in ourselves. If you spot it, you got it; if you can see it, you can be it.]

Then say:

There is a 2nd Column Question, a Third Column question and a Fourth Column question that will help us see our truth clearly.

The Second Column question is: "Where have YOU been each of those things, such as 'controlling,' 'manipulative,' and whatever else you've listed?"

[Allow time to discuss]

The Third Column question is: "Where have you tried to have a human fulfill those seven areas of perceived needs in Column Three when in truth only God can do that?" [Allow time to discuss]

If being selfish is of the ego and thus insane, then self-seeking is also insane; and our experiences proved over and over that our dishonesty hurt us so that's insane; and fears are all based in illusion so that's insane to allow the way we feel to be determined by illusions. So...

*The Fourth Column question is: "Where in each of the cases you listed in column one was your behavior **insane** (selfish/dishonest, etc.)?"*

Really, isn't it hilarious, considering the way we have lived, that we would think we have the right to criticize anyone? Especially when we're only seeing in them the very faults that are in us? Can you see that you have done some

things to people that need forgiving? What are the odds that they are going to walk up to you out of the blue and say that they forgive you?

Now that you see these defects, the nature of your wrongs, and now that you know that they are what led you to do the wrongs you've done, and since they are really what caused your life to be unmanageable and insane at times, don't you want to get rid of them? Remember, we cannot ask God to get rid of the THINGS we did in the past--but we can ask God to remove these defects that caused us to act in the manner that we did. Are you ready and willing to ask for that? (PAUSE) Then you've completed Steps 4-6. We do Step Seven the way it was written in the original manuscript of the Big Book: "On our knees, we humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings." So we invite you to have your inventory sheet ready as we read together the original Seventh Step Prayer. [Hand out prayer] We ask you now to kneel and read this together with us. We will pause when the time comes in the prayer for you to say out loud the specific defects that you uncovered in the second column of inventory. [READ IN UNISON--pause at "shortcomings."]

ORIGINAL SEVENTH STEP PRAYER

as Used by DR. BOB

Dear God

I am coming to You on my knees in all humility to humbly ask You to forgive all my past wrongs and to remove all my defects of character. I want to start a new life today, and I ask You to help me do so and to keep helping if I keep asking.

In Step Three, I turned my will and my life over to Your care. Thank You for taking complete control of my life, and thank You for this opportunity to wipe my slate clean and start my life anew. In Steps Four, Five and Six I have completed my moral inventory and admitted to myself and another person the exact nature of my wrongs. I now admit these wrongs to You, God.

I am entirely ready to ask and pray now that You please remove from me every single defect of character. Specifically, I ask You to remove the following shortcomings listed in my Fourth Step moral inventory: (Read aloud here those defects from your list.)

Thank You, God, for this opportunity for a new beginning in my life and a chance to be a part of the solutions in life instead of the problems. Please grant me wisdom, knowledge and strength as I go out from here to do Your work and live the Victorious Life You designed for me.

Thank You, God, for the steps which will make Your plan for my life clear to me. Thank You and praise Your name. Amen.

Finally, we're told to return home for an hour and review everything we've learned, so we'll give you a guide that you can use to uncover any other past liabilities that we've possibly overlooked. Then use the prayer included there to ask God to remove those defects as well.

Guide to 6TH AND 7TH STEP + Rationale

Steps 4 and 5 may leave certain areas uncovered that yet need review. Use of the guide will allow you to discover/uncover any remaining shortcomings that have caused you and others so much trouble. We must find our part in those troubles. (We now know that it is the subconscious part of the mind that causes alcoholics so much trouble in terms of the mental part of our disease.) Part of the guide will help you bring those beliefs to the conscious part of your mind and address them, see where they are causing you problems, and afford you the opportunity to ask God to remove them. Also, reference is made to techniques that humans use to protect their egos. The guide will help you see where you have been driven by ego to use those trouble-producing methods. Finally, we're told that some of our troubles are caused by our "fallacious reasoning," so the guide will help you uncover certain errors in the way we alcoholics think.

After Step Five, we are told to return home, find a place where we cannot be disturbed, and spend one hour to "carefully review" what we have done. Now that we have thoroughly examined ourselves and admitted our faults to self, to God and to one or more humans, we must uncover any remaining defects of character that may be in us before asking God to remove all these defects of character. Our egos do not like an honest inventory, and ego will fight for its life with such thoughts as, "I know, but..." or "Yeah, but...." Over 60 years of working with alcoholics have proved time and again that there are 20 defects most of us alcoholics have in common, and that most people in the world have, that make up the nature of human wrongs and which lead to our problems. In us alcoholics, the defects are usually expressed to a magnified degree. The truth is, these 20 defects are what caused us to do wrongs. To be certain that we do not overlook any of our defects that we'll want God to remove, let's see how many, in all honesty, we can identify. *Please circle in the second column any of the liabilities you can now see have been a part of your life*

Fourth Step MORAL Inventory

ASSETS (Positives)

1. Forgiveness
2. Love / Loving
3. Self-Forgetfulness
4. Humility
5. Modesty
6. Self-Valuation
7. Honesty
8. Patience
9. Unpretentiousness
10. Trust
11. Satisfaction
12. Activity / Industriousness
13. Promptness
14. Straightforwardness
15. Positive Thinking
16. Spiritual(Sane) Thinking
17. Tolerance / Not Controlling
18. Praise for Others
19. Calm / Silent
20. Generous

LIABILITIES (Negatives)

1. Resentment / Anger
2. Fear/Judgmentalism/Opinions
3. Self-Pity / Whining
4. Self-Justification
5. Self-Importance / Egotism
6. Self-Condemnation / Guilt
7. Lying / Evasion / Dishonesty
8. Impatience
9. False Pride / Phoniness /Denial
10. Uncertainty / Jealousy
11. Envy/Craving/Need/Want
12. Laziness/ Seeker of Shortcuts
13. Procrastination /Inconsiderate
14. Insincerity
15. Negative Thinking
16. Immoral (Insane) Thinking
17. Intolerance/"Saving"/Perfection
18. Criticism/Loose Talk / Gossip
19. Go-er/Do-er/Zoomer/Talker
20. Greed / Faithlessness

Our founders knew that the Fifth Step says we are looking for the “nature” of our wrongs at this point, not all our wrongs. They also knew we could never be happy, joyous and free unless we see OUR PART in the troubles in our lives. To get that awareness, you just looked at 20 more areas specifically. We invite you now to look at another set of liabilities that we exhibited in the past that also blocked off other assets. These liabilities, when they manifested, separated us from our Real Self and from God and from others.

Now we can see why: we are human and others are human. When we acted INHUMAN, of course we became separated from them, we became isolated, loners; we felt a sense of “aloneness,” a sense of abandonment.

Using the dictionary definition of “human” and “inhuman,” we are presented with a second set of assets and liabilities:

<u>HUMAN</u>	<u>INHUMAN</u>
vulnerable	fiendish
fallible	devilish
mortal	beastly
kind	brutal
considerate	barbarous
gentle	vicious
forgiving	merciless
generous	animalistic
understanding	brutish
good-natured	bestial
sensitive	unfeeling

Is it possible that in the Realm of Spirit/Love/Sanity that we can be human and divine and mindful? Is it possible that in the Realm of self/Fear/Insanity we can be inhuman, into self, and mindless? Is it possible that the power of the 7th Step Prayer is real? That we can ask God to remove the things from our subconscious mind that guided us to do wrong, to start now guiding us properly instead, and that God can do that and will? Is it possible that it really works, and when I asked God to remove the anger I felt (which usually reached the point of rage) that God did that, and that what appears now is a milder anger and is NOT that same defect, that it was REALLY removed? And each times I ask, God removes what appears to be a similar defect, and I might have anger of the 20th degree but not the more harmful anger of the 30th degree? Is it possible that I was inhuman, but if God removes those defects that made me behave in an inhuman way, I will have a New Way of Living that cannot include those inhuman behaviors--even when my human shortcomings appear? If that is possible, I must find, recognize and admit each specific defect, so we invite you to use the following definitions to look at each inhuman behavior we exercised or trait that we exhibited and list a time in your life when you might have done the same:

1. FIENDISH (wicked; cruel; malicious; evil.)
WHEN? _____
2. DEVILISH (personified evil; wicked; cruel; dark; a villain.)
WHEN? _____
3. BEASTLY (objectionable; unpleasant; disagreeable; intolerable;
uncivilized; uncultivated; uncivil; cruel; savage.)
WHEN? _____
4. BRUTAL (savage; viciously cruel.)
WHEN? _____
5. BARBAROUS (rough; uncultured; showing an absence of civilized
standards; rude.)
WHEN? _____
6. VICIOUS (bad-tempered; spiteful; violent; addicted to vice; unsound;
nasty; bitter; vindictive; rotten; bitchy; immoral; shameful.)
7. MERCILESS (without pity for others; showing no mercy.)
WHEN? _____
8. ANIMALISTIC (driven by sensuality, sexual desire; doing in public
things that usually only animals do in public.)
WHEN? _____
9. BRUTISH (unreasonable; cruel; stupid; unthinking; merely physical--not
in control of emotions or reasoning ability.)
WHEN? _____
10. BESTIAL (like a beast; preoccupied with sex only.)
WHEN? _____
11. UNFEELING (unsympathetic; harsh.)
WHEN? _____

Have you seen where you exhibited those traits in the past? Having completed our self-examination and recognizing all of our character defects, we now say the following out loud:

“The traits and behaviors uncovered in my self-examinations are objectionable. God, I am now ready to let You remove from me all the things which I have admitted inspired me to act in an insane and inhuman way, and because I know You have done that for millions of other alcoholics, I am going to believe that You can now take these defects away from me. AMEN.”

You are now ready for a shorter form of the Seventh Step Prayer regarding ALL the liabilities uncovered. Read the prayer aloud now, on your knees:

“My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.”

You are now the cleanest, purest person on the face of the earth. Why? Because you haven't had a chance to harm anyone or practice your defects after their removal seconds ago! Because you haven't even had a chance for even a milder form of them to show up! But please remember two things: the prayer asked God to take all of you, good and bad. You are a divine creature having a human experience. These defects WILL disappear and NEVER return if you do the rest of the work outlined in the steps. (Remember, where I once raged, I might get angry. Where my anger was to the 30th degree, now it is only to the 20th degree.) The next time I do evening review and ask God to remove the new manifestations of a different level defect, God will remove those, too. When the human side comes forth, embrace your humanness. Know that all twelve steps must be used repeatedly to kill off that which has caused all our problems, and be prepared to rework the steps regularly when versions of the shortcomings above reappear.

So is that the end of your work? No, this is the beginning. You will be shown in the next session what you must do on a daily basis in order never to return to the **inhuman self** again while at the same time accepting your HUMANNES and reveling in your DIVINITY.

Finally, we have a caution we'd like to share from our experiences: for many people who worked 6 and 7 honestly in the past, it seems that life often takes a real downhill turn. We often complain in the days after that "This doesn't work!" The fact is, if you see things in your life going especially poorly, it means that the steps up through Step Seven DID work. Here's why: your defects that allowed your self-will to run riot have been removed, but your self is not completely gone. Why? Because your MIND, the subconscious part that controls what you DO, has not been changed--it still contains a lot of old ideas and beliefs and you have not yet developed the skills necessary to go to the second (opposite) thought which comes when we allow God to guide us totally. We only get that result by doing Step 11 every morning, without fail. Also, your ego/self remains in tact until you finish Steps 8 and 9 and make ALL amends. Therefore, conflict will manifest within you: your ego will fight with your mind and your mind will not yet be aligned with the Will of God that will now activate in your life since you asked for that to happen. But there is good news: our experience shows that conflict precedes clarity just as pain precedes growth. When our will was, let's say, to "be an ass," and our mind said, "Yes, I'm an ass, and you can go drop dead, and I don't care," there was no conflict. Our self-will and our mind were aligned. But the Creator is now making a change in the two wills we deal with: my will is losing power and God's will is gaining control of my life. But my thought-life will only change when I do steps 8 and 9 thoroughly and commence working Steps 10, 11, and 12 at the same time on a daily basis. Records kept during the early decades showed that most people went back out and drank at one of two points: before completing inventory steps 4-6 and after Step 7 as they delayed working the remaining steps. (Listen--and notice when people are asked what step they are working on--how many will answer "Step Three" or "Step Eight.") So, you have the facts. We hope you will join us to continue the work that will lead to your full recovery from this disease. Try to bake a cake that has 12 steps in the procedure, but just do 8 of those steps and see what a mess you have. Ha! You are changed now, and you cannot be content ever again unless you do the remainder of the work in Steps 8 to 12. So before we meet with you again, you need to complete not only this guide but also the 8th step list that follows. You write the names only, then next time we meet we'll write with you the actions called for. Remember, you agreed to go to any length to get a better life, so please do this step and bring this form back to the next session. Thanks. Looking forward to seeing you soon.

EIGHT STEP LIST

Names of relatives
I've had problems with:

Action:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Names of employees/employers
I've had problems with:

Action:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Names of agencies/institutions
I've had problems with:

Action:

Names of laws/rules
I've had problems with:

Action:

Names of people/businesses
 I owe money:

Action:

Before leaving tonight, please get some phone numbers to call us during the coming week. We invite you to speak to one of us regularly. Please remember to bring all of your materials back with you. Thanks for being here, and we'll see you next week.

SESSION TWO (Steps Eight and Nine)

Welcome to the second session of the “Beginner’s Classes,” as they were called early on. We took the first six steps to find our truth. We’re also told that we “know God better,” and some have asked how that can be. That happens because in the inventory phase, we found out what God’s job is so that we could stop playing God, so we can get out of self, out of ego. That process made clear that it’s

God's job, not mine, to do the following: 1. control others 2. judge others 3. tell other people how to live 4. decide the fate of others 5. have expectations of others 6. define the standards by which people should live.

Next, we would like to share some of our experiences when we were at this point in *The Work*. Many of us realized for the first time in our lives the harm we put out into the universe under the influence of our disease. Thus, many of us were plagued with guilt. But if you'll look at the asset side of your inventory, you'll see what is really inside you that was blocked off by the liabilities. Now, those things can manifest, and when they do, we become useful and of real help to others. We also came to see that we had done the best we could, considering our degree of spiritual fitness--or unfitness! We never got up any morning and said, "You know, I think tonight I'll tell my spouse I'll be home at 5 and really show at 11." We never planned to do anything that hurtful. We really planned to only have 1- or maybe two--drinks at most. We did not understand the phenomenon of craving and the obsessive mind. We had no choice. Remember: we are not saints. We are divine creatures having a human experience. Let us accept our human side and not beat ourselves up any more. We've done enough of that.

So it's time to ask you this: "Are you willing to admit to your innermost self that you have harmed some people, that you have taken some things that were not yours, and that you know that you have broken some relationships that need mending in order for you to have any humility and for you and them to have any peace?" {PAUSE} Then it's time now to clear away the wreckage of our past. We do this by making amends and restitution. ["Restitution" is defined as "the giving back of something that was taken away." Sometimes we took money; Sometimes we took peace of mind. We have taken many things from many people. It's time to stop that behavior and to make amends.]

Step 8 says: “Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.”

OK, please take out your list. First, Step Eight is much more than making a list. We are told that we are going to "go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past." First, therefore, we have to be willing to go. We will GO to those we damaged. (We will be told that only when such an approach is absolutely impossible might we then write a letter instead.) Next, we are going to repair the damage. What repairs are necessary? We cannot know what repairs are necessary unless we know what harm we did. In many cases, the harm seems obvious, but the full extent cannot be realized until we “get into that person's shoes. Do you see that you closed off a part of some people's hearts by your actions? Do you realize that, because a part of some people’s heart is closed off, that others in their lives have been deprived of the fullness of those people and of all that those people could have offered to others if you had not closed off a part of those hearts? Do you realize that the people you harmed, whose hearts you closed the door on, could go to a thousand therapists and still not have that door opened because only you have the key? And if only you have the key, and if only you can open the door to the heart that you closed, then do you see why it is imperative that you go to each person and open up each heart? You said that you were willing to go to any length to get the miracles that come through working these steps, so here is the Step Eight question: Are you now willing to go on to Step Nine and begin to make the amends that you must make in order to allow your will to pass away, to let God’s Will come to the front, to return to sanity, to be happy, joyous, and free? (Pause) Good. Now, we can go to the Ninth Step.

Step 9 says: “Made direct amends to such people, whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.”

First, let us mention that you are not "others." Now, the amends process is explained as the authors tell us what to do: "We attempt to

sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will and run the show ourselves." So, write next to each of the names what action you need to take to clear up any harm you've done. It is a good idea to get input on each, so you write and then we'll look over them.

(Allow time)

Now, why would I want to make all these amends? First because if I'm making a cake with 12 steps in the recipe and I stop with 7, I will never have a cake. Remember: our founders noted that 90% who went back out stopped at Step Three. Of those who make it past there, 90% of those who went back out stopped after Step Eight. Why make these amends? In order to live and live sanely and free! [There is a price for everything I do in my recovery work, and there is a price for everything I don't do in my recovery work; there is a reward for every action I take, and there is misery waiting for every action I skip.] Next, remember that this is no big deal. This is just one Child of God going to another Child of God and saying three things: 1. Here's what I did, and I am sorry. 2. How can I make this right? 3. Is there anything else we need to discuss? (Sometimes we don't like to ask that, thinking, "Hey--why open up a new can of worms?" The fact is, anything that comes out is already there, and if you don't allow it to come out by asking the question, it will stay there and manifest in some other way that will be troublesome in the relationship.) Also, how they react is of no consequence. A man said that he was having trouble making his amends. We pointed out that he was really not convinced that "to drink is to die," because if he were, he'd be doing anything possible--going to any length--to set up arrangements to settle the amends he owes. Remember, the only time Dr. Bob went back out and got drunk after starting this work was when he stopped at step eight. Once he sobered up after that binge, he made all his amends and arranged for all payments due in one day. He never drank again.

Finally, is it possible for YOU to complete ALL of your amends? On your power--no. You didn't have the power to quit drinking; you didn't have the power to manage your life effectively; you didn't have the power to figure out what your real problem was; you haven't had the power to get over these things that are bothering you; you've got resentments that you have held onto for years. You never had the power to let go of them. You have amends that you have owed for years. You never had the power to correct them. Ask God to give you the strength to do what you must. There is no feeling like the one we get when we make our last amends. It's a level of freedom that very few experience (which is why you'll seldom hear amends-making discussed and which is why 90-95% fail to stay sober nowadays.) So, how much freedom do you want? How soon do you want to get it? Our EXPERIENCES emphatically prove that we have no future until we clean up the past, so, as the Book says: "We ask for strength--we do not shrink at anything."

We are given after the Ninth Step another list of benefits. They tell us precisely what is going to happen once we commence to clear away the wreckage of our past. They describe these benefits as "promises." These are the things we are promised to receive before we finish even half of our amends: "If we are painstaking [that means, "willing to take this pain"] about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through. [Halfway would be, if you have 20 amends to make, before you make 10 of them, these things come true for you.] We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves. Are

these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us--sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. (The variable there is how quickly we get our amends done.) They will always materialize if we work for them."

Please notice that these promises don't say: "Well, now that you're making amends, you're gonna start to have a pretty good day." Instead, what a **message** of hope! It is **almost** beyond comprehension that all of these wonderful events will occur if we make amends to those whom we have harmed. But, they will happen--that's a guarantee. Yet you don't have the power to do what you must to get these promises in your life, namely, make amends. So pray for the strength and willingness. Please remember: "sin" is the breaking of relationships; amends is the making of relationships. This step is going to bring you Atonement; that is, "at-one-ment" . . . being at one with God, with others, with your Real Self. Now, many of us are impatient people. We want everything done in an instant. Can we finish all of our amends in one day, as our co-founder Dr. Bob did? Maybe not, but let us ask you this: isn't there at least ONE amends you can make before going to bed tonight? (At this point, you might want to role-play the amends, showing how it could go if the amends is accepted and then how it might go if the amends is rejected.) Will you go make that amends and then call us and let us know what happened? Great. Are there any questions? Fine, then choose the person here whom you'll call after you make the amends to discuss what happened with it. Thanks. See you next session.

SESSION THREE (Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve)

Welcome back. We will be discussing Steps 10 to 12 which help us connect with God and our fellows in order to live soberly, to be happy in sobriety, and to live a sane life. So let's start with Step Ten: **Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.** We see in Step Ten that we are powerless, that our behavior was insane (and can be again), that only a greater Power can save us from ourselves, that we must find our truth daily through inventory, that we must discuss daily any problems with another, that we have to make amends, and that we have to stay close to God and help others. So you see, we are really instructed to do all of the steps every day! Bill referred to the "Reconstruction of the Ego." It will come back. If we had to work steps One to Nine initially to kill the ego, we will repeat those steps again later when it returns. Self-will returns. When it does, we must take the actions necessary to get out of self. Why else do Step Ten? We were told that we must "...continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear." [So we will experience those. Don't pressure yourself to be perfect, but turn from them when they come.] The authors tells us that if we will continue the practice daily, God will remove the obsession to drink. Listing what we call the "Tenth Step Promises," the authors tell us: "And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone-

-even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned. We will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame. We react sanely and normally and we find that this has happened automatically. [What is a sane and normal reaction to something that makes us sick and ruins the lives of us and those around us? To say, "No thanks" to opportunities to drink! THAT'S a sane and normal reaction for us. And if we want that "sane and normal" reaction, it MUST come automatically. Remember we tried to think through the drink and failed. We said we'd control it--or stop--but we failed. The reaction must be automatic, and it cannot be automatic if we're not on "automatic pilot." Like the planes on automatic pilot that let a directional beam keep them within set boundaries, we sit each morning and seek that kind of direction/guidance as well, so we'll stay on the beam.] We will see that our new attitude toward liquor has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! So we don't have to "Think, Think, Think." In fact, our experience has shown it's much better when we don't. We just sit back and relax now, and let God-directed intuition guide us down the river of life. We're like a leaf, floating along: whether in peaceful waters or turbulent waters, we just float along. In the end, we see now that it's all the same. Of the three options to fight, flee, or flow, today we . . . flow. That is the miracle of it. We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation. We feel as though we have been placed in a position of neutrality--safe and protected. We have not even sworn off. Instead the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky nor are we afraid. That is our experience. That is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition.

How do we keep in fit spiritual (sane) condition? By practicing Step Ten as written in the book, not as condensed on the wall signs--and by doing Steps Eleven and Twelve daily. What is our reward? A daily reprieve from booze, from insanity, from fighting. The authors remind us: We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve from our physical and mental disease, contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition."

Finally, the Tenth Step gives us some tools to use on a daily basis. Here they are: “watch,” “ask,” and “turn.” Watch for ego’s return. Ask God to remove it. Turn from the self, from self-will, towards God’s will. So here is your Tenth Step question: “Will you continue to take daily personal inventory, continue to set right any new mistakes as you go along, and rework the steps when you become restless, irritable or discontented because self-will has returned”? (Wait for answers) Thank you. Congratulations!

Now, let’s discuss the Eleventh Step. Step 11 says: **“Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of God’s will for us and the power to carry that out.”** We are told repeatedly how our founders did their daily prayer-meditation-and-guidance sessions. We’ll share this information with you.

**THE EARLIEST GATHERINGS: GUIDANCE SESSIONS
(BB= The Big Book; DB= Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers)
(See Bibliographical Entries at end for documentation of this part
of this research reporting)**

BB: “We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance....”

The second step of the program originally was: dependence and guidance from a higher Power,” modified later into Step 11: “sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God...praying for knowledge of His will....”

BB: “I placed myself unreservedly under His care and direction.”

BB: “I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength....”

BB: “I was to test my thinking....”

BB: “...We began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction, provided we took other simple steps. We found that God does not make too hard terms with those who seek Him..., who earnestly seek.”

BB: “...A new sense of direction flowed into them.”

BB: “” ...We asked that we be givendirection....”

BB: “Much has already been said about receiving ...direction from Him....”

BB: “What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition.”

BB: “Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God’s will into all our activities.”

BB: “Step eleven suggests prayer and meditation.”

BB: “We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking.”

BB: “...We ask God for inspiration, and intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while.”

BB: “...We ask our wives or friends to join us in morning meditation.”

BB: “If we belong to a religious denomination which requires a morning devotion, we attend to that also.”

BB: “...We...select and memorize a few set prayers....”

BB: “There are many helpful books also.”

BB: “Make use of what (religious people) offer.”

BB: “...Asking each morning in meditation that our Creator show us the way....”

BB: “We usually conclude the period of meditation with a prayer....”

BB: “...they can be invited to join in morning meditation and then they can join in the daily discussion....”

BB: “Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day....”

DB: “each morning there was a devotion..., a long silence, in which they awaited inspiration and guidance....”

DB: “Prayer. Then we’d be quiet. Finally, everybody would share what they got, or didn’t get.”

DB: “You were supposed to go by yourself with a pad and pencil and put down anything that came into your mind. Later in the day, it might come to you why.”

DB: “The A.A. members of that time did not consider meetings necessary to maintain sobriety. They were simply ‘desirable.’ Morning devotion and ‘quiet time,’ however, were musts.”

DB: “Duke remembered taking a poll of ‘slippers’ in the early 1940’s and finding that they had all stopped having their morning quiet time. Now, after 38 years, Katie and I still have our quiet time and morning reading.”

DB: “...Something was lost from A.A. when we stopped emphasizing the morning meditation. (Bill and Lois themselves, however, continued this practice together until his death, in 1971.)”

(GUIDANCE SESSION FORMAT)

Our founders met each morning in the living room of Dr. Bob’s home and held guidance sessions. Here is the format followed:

1. A few minutes of quiet time.
2. Inspirational readings.
3. Next, the founders got pen and paper, and after the readings and sharing, they went into the silence.
4. Then they wrote whatever thoughts came to them.
5. After that, they shared, one at a time, the guidance that came to them. Sometimes the guidance was for the writer--sometimes it was for someone else there.
6. Then, they closed, after which all had the opportunity to go to a quiet place in the house for individual prayers on their knees.

(Such is the way our founders did morning prayer-meditation-and guidance when they were enjoying a 93% success rate)

There is a reward for the God-Consciousness that results from doing the above procedure every day. For many of us, our first thought can still be a totally wrong thought. The second thought, the opposite thought of the first, more often is the real truth. For example: my first, insane thought might be: “I think I’ll go in on Monday and tell the boss to shove this job.” Our second, opposite thought, which might be less self-destructive, would be: “No, I think instead I’ll find another job before I quit this one.” For many of us, the history of our decision-making, in drunkenness and in sobriety, has been a time line of disaster. Thus, we ask God for guidance and

thereby free ourselves of having to make decisions. As we do regular guidance writing, the vital sixth sense begins to work for us. 5 sense living=fear; 6th sense=love & peace.

Why do this on a daily basis? Please consider: I had a physical awakening this morning based on an experience I had with my alarm clock. I did not reach a state of being physically awake today based on an experience I had with my alarm clock yesterday, the day before or several years ago. So it is with spiritual awakenings: I have to have daily experiences with God in order to stay awake spiritually on a daily basis. We drink only because we are not spiritually fit (sane). Not because we quit going to meetings. Not because we did not think through the drink--we cannot do that. Only because we do not do the daily work to get and stay spiritually fit(sane). So we seek God's guidance daily to stay spiritually fit(sane). We write or ask questions of God, and we write God's answers to us. We review those answers regularly and are amazed to see how God's work in our lives is unfolding with a pattern and with promptness to our unselfish requests.

In addition to morning prayer and meditation, we also receive the following advice about spending a few minutes each night in review: "When we retire at night, we constructively review our day. Were we resentful, selfish/dishonest, or afraid? The Big Book authors ask us to answer these questions every evening. This is yet another form of an assets and liabilities checklist as well as another form of "Quiet Time," "Meditation," and "Guidance."

So, we ask you the Eleventh Step question: "Just as you had a negative daily routine when drinking, we ask if you are willing to commit yourself to a positive daily routine in which you will spend time each morning in reading, in prayer, in meditation and in the writing of guidance and if you are willing to commit to spend a few minutes each night in evening review?" (Wait for answers.)

To help you get started with this vital step, we are going to give you a guide for Step Eleven. Please get up a few minutes early each morning to

use it. Our experience is that we're glad we make that sacrifice. It's the only way we have really found true peace.

Please remember: if my conscious mind and my unconscious mind have gotten me where I am today, and are responsible for all the past messes in my life, is there much chance those might suddenly begin to guide me properly now? Not in our experience. We are told we have a Universal Mind and it is that Universal Mind that will guide us and do for us what we cannot do for ourselves: namely, control what we think, since we can't and never will be able to. Some in RECOVERY try to formulate a different plan rather than get up early and seek conscious contact with the Universal Mind. Are we wrong, or are you like us? Haven't you formulated hundreds of "plans" in the past? Did they work? Plans are of the conscious mind and are flushed down the drain by the power of the subconscious mind. We are beyond human aid and we, too, are human. The one true plan we have seen work is this: plan on getting up and allowing God, through guidance, to lead you and to do what you cannot do for yourself. Please try it, we beg.

Can there really be such a thing as a "Universal Mind" that can guide you to peace and love and happiness? Let's try a quick experiment and see. In a moment, I'll ask you to close your eyes. First, pretend that you've had a rough day and you want peace. You can go anywhere, but I invite you to imagine a place where you've never been. This will be a peaceful place that you can go to for a short time and relax totally. At the end of this sentence, close your eyes and let your mind picture such a place--a place that is totally peaceful and restful, in your mind. (Close eyes for several minutes and imagine).

Now, this place that you imagined--did it have any of these ingredients?:

--were you in an isolated spot, close to nature?

--were you near water?

--were you alone?

--were you in the silence?

---were you somewhere where you could not hear the voices of others?

So no one was talking to you, right? We've done this with thousands, and 999 out of 1000 always receive that image from their Mind. "Uni"= one. One thought, the same thought as all the other people who had the same thought, that came from our UNIVersal Mind. You have just experienced conscious contact with God! Wow! The Universal Mind, the Unseen God, just manifested into your conscious mind, and you were given guidance as to how to find peace. (By the way--did you not have any of the ingredients above? Did your guidance tell you that if you are having a bad day to not go alone and seek God's guidance but to go instead to say---a meeting? And to get around a lot of people? And talk about all your troubles? And listen to all their different pieces of human advice? And then to let them talk and dump out all their troubles? If you had that image, it was not, by our thousands of past experiences, from the Universal Mind.)

This step is the basis of our behaving sanely and normally. We have no choice about whether we do this step or not. We suggest you invite a friend or friends to participate with you. Should any think he or she can choose not to do daily prayer and meditation and guidance writing, the reality of Step One has not been grasped, for we are truly powerless over alcohol and powerless to make our lives manageable. We are quite capable of returning to insane behavior at any moment if we're not spiritually fit. We cannot stop ourselves from drinking or being miserable or selfish. Only God can do that if we stay in contact with God on a regular basis. We are beyond human aid, and our actions--not just our words--show that we believe that "to drink is to die." Now, here's the guide, and we're going to go through this process with you this first time. First, take out pen and paper, please. (Pause) Now, let's begin with the guide. (Let volunteers read various sections--get as many involved as possible).

GUIDE TO MEDITATION AND PRAYER and GUIDANCE

(Repeat daily each morning following inventory, and until change comes)

"God, I realize that the people who wronged me are perhaps sick people. I ask you to help me show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that I would cheerfully grant a sick friend. Please show me how to be helpful to those I resent, and save me from my anger. Show me where I have been selfish, self-seeking, dishonest or fear-based, thus causing my own trouble, and relieve me of the notion that I have to retaliate or that I am a victim.

"I ask too that You relieve me of all my fears, worries, and doubts. I pray that You will start immediately to make all decisions for me. Until my pain and suffering leave, please help me realize that both are leading to positive change in my life.

"In all my relations, I ask for Your guidance. Please give me a vision of a sane and sound ideal in my sex relations, and let me imagine what might happen in my life were I able to move closer to the ideal I have been trying to glimpse. Thank You, God. AMEN.

ALL READ TOGETHER: God made it simple; I should keep it the way God made it. "God made us simple; our complex problems are of our own devising." (Ecclesiastes 7:30) Now,

say: "I will keep it real simple by releasing to God all decision-making today."

Because Dr. Bob recommended daily readings of what he called "Power Phrases," let's read take turns reading these:

- I will have no expectations nor make demands today
 - What I resist persists
 - I will cease fighting
- I can resist nothing today while still standing up for my own Highest Good
 - I do not have the power to drive anyone crazy or make anyone sane. Each individual is responsible for her/his own peace of mind
- It is none of my business what anyone thinks about me or about anything else
- I do not have the power to make anyone stay in my life
 - I do not have the power to drive anyone away
 - I do not have the power to make anyone miserable
 - I do not have the power to make anyone happy
 - I will love all
 - I do not have to like all
- My goal is peace of mind (also known as "sanity" or "spiritual living")
- The only way I can forgive someone today is to think I am "The Forgiver, God"; I and the world will be better off if I do not judge in the first place
 - Not being God, I do not know what is "good" or "bad," and since God knows all and does only good, everything is ultimately for the good
 - God will take charge when I let go

- I do not need to know anything or understand anything but I shall instead only seek God's guidance, which I receive intuitively if I become still and quiet
- I will not wish, hope, want, desire, nor crave today
 - I will not seek love--I will simply give love
 - I will receive human love, should God send it; however, I can only be content if I'm attached to God alone
- I cannot be content in a human relationship with anyone until I am content without any human relationship
 - I will seek nothing God does not send
 - I will accept all that is sent by God
 - I will think less and employ intuition more
 - The past is gone--it's an image in my mind
- The future can be no more than an image in my mind
 - Therefore, the present moment is the only real moment. I shall not allow false images to affect the way I feel
 - Everything really is going to be OK

EACH READS INDIVIDUALLY: What is happening that you need to say "I love this" about? (Explain why you'll not only accept it but love it?)

ALL READ: Today I will say several times:

- "Whatever."
 - "I must get rid of that belief."
- "I have no opinion to express about that."

**THINGS THAT DON'T MEAN A THING IN THIS LIFE, AS
REVEALED BY MY OWN EXPERIENCE, OR THE
EXPERIENCES OTHERS HAVE SHARED**

(List here those things, and then re-read them daily)

Now, to show you how you can get in touch with God, with your Universal Mind, we will ask you now to think for a moment and decide what issue is most pressing in your life right now. Think about that problem area. Now, as we go into the silence, ask God to reveal something about that. Do not worry about remembering any of your thoughts during the quiet time. If your mind wanders, do not fight it, but return to asking the Universal Mind to give you guidance around that problem area.

Now, as we go into the silence, please sit up, place your hands in your lap, and let's close our eyes and begin the session with several very deep breaths. Then try to relax. We'll let you know when it is

time to open your eyes and then, remaining silent, we'll write what thoughts--if any--came. Then, we'll share our thoughts. Let's go into the silence now. (After 5-10 minutes, allow writing time, then sharing time. Then test the thoughts: "Were your thoughts selfish, self-seeking, dishonest or fear-based? If so, they were from the conscious or subconscious mind. If they were not, then they were probably from God.)

Now, let's move on to the Twelfth Step: Step 12 says: **"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."**

Now that we've made conscious contact with God, we are awakened to the desires of others and want to be helpful and loving to all. We see that, to be happy, we must love everyone-- even if we don't like their behavior. We stop judging others and getting angry with their insane behavior because we have seen our own. But the spiritual awakening is just a part of the Twelfth Step. Let's look at what we have to do to sustain this spiritual transformation [and thus sustain our sanity and therefore our sobriety.]

We are told: "Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. When we work with others, our lives change. We are told: "This is an experience you must not miss. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot in our lives." [See, you will not cling to a sponsor. You are beyond human aid! You will cling to God. After doing the steps, you are not just in the spirit of the fellowship. You have moved into the Fellowship of the Spirit. Bill W. said in an essay that you must practice the "Principle of Absolute Dependence on God." So instead of clinging to a sponsor, you will, instead, immediately become a person who teaches others the steps. Remember: Ebby T., who carried the message to Bill W., only had 60 days. A "sponsoring" commitment did not go beyond the few sessions we have done.

Everyone had too much work to do to cling or to be clung to. Those recovered helped all who needed help, but the ultimate goal was to get people to become independent of human guidance and dependent on God-guidance.] We were just told that working with others is “...an experience you must not miss.” You must get to work by helping others through the classes, through the steps, or you will regress into the insanity of drinking. Working with others reminds us of what our conscious minds will forget: that we were really sick mentally and physically and we can be again--very quickly.

Being of service to others is critical to our continued growth and the maintenance of our sobriety. Now all that’s left is to practice these principles in all our affairs. What principles? The steps. They are the principles we practice daily for the rest of our lives. You will make continual trips through all the steps. This is just your first trip through, not your last. Step Ten tells us to touch the truth of all 12 steps daily.

So we ask you the Twelfth Step question: “Will you carry this message to other alcoholics and practice the Twelve Step principles in all your affairs”? (Wait for answers). Thanks. Congratulations. You are now no longer only in the spirit of the fellowship but have moved into The Fellowship of God’s Spirit.

Finally, a 1946 Washington, D.C. pamphlet says that these classes are but an introduction. So, after finishing the classes, we suggest you do the following in order to Maintain Fit Spiritual Condition (also known as, “sanity,” “happiness,” “joy,” and “freedom.”) HERE ARE

**“THE TWELVE STEPS TO STAYING HAPPY, JOYOUS,
FREE, SOBER, AND SANE”**

1. Do your morning Quiet Time without fail, along with your Evening Review. Read the literature available.
2. Attend speaker meetings, guidance sessions, and other meetings to find and help newcomers get through the steps quickly. Your daily meetings now should be in the morning and in the evening--with God. The time spent there is a must. The Book says we go to

meetings to help newcomers. Let that be the test of whether you “need a meeting” or not, for we are told that the only reason they had meetings was to help newcomers. The founders never conducted anything even closely similar to what we call “discussion meetings” today.

3. Study the program, the steps--200 words.
4. Practice the principles of the program daily.
5. Read stimulating books. We are told that there are many inspirational books that can help us. Use them until you can go into the silence and hear guidance without any stimulation.
6. Hold informal conversations with recovered people about any concerns.
7. Take the classes over immediately, now “sponsoring” someone.
8. Take the classes later as refresher--remember we were told the classes are for old members as well as newcomers.
9. Volunteer to teach the classes. You’ll only need to read straight from the guide. It’s easy. We never forget that recovery is an on-going process. We do not take the steps once and then rest on our laurels. Remember, alcohol is a subtle foe. We must repeat the process again and again in order to remain in fit spiritual condition. So please come back for the next series of classes
10. Find drunks. Sit down with them and read this guide together. Call pastors to refer to you those suffering or to see if they would be willing to host groups in their churches. You may also know a doctor who can refer patients. There are many treatment centers and halfway houses and jails that will welcome you. We have been to dozens. The Salvation Army and other such institutions usually welcome volunteers. We do not have to go to meetings and sit there and wait for drunks to find us. We do have to serve drunks if we are to stay sober.
11. Participate in guidance sessions daily.
12. Do the regular inventory (using the sheets that follow):

IN SHORT, HERE’S HOW WE STAY SOBER

1. We help others, using this guide to take them through the steps. Then, we see that the sane, spiritual life also has some paradoxes to it, such as WE GIVE IT AWAY TO KEEP IT. We do not have to understand any longer. We just do what we are told. Why? Because the peace we want is beyond all understanding.

2. We seek guidance every morning, abandoning dependence on our conscious and subconscious minds and seeking guidance from the Universal Mind. WE SURRENDER ALL FIGHTING TO WIN--WE SURRENDER TO GUIDANCE IN ORDER TO WIN.

3. All our lives, we were in a fight-or-flee mode. Now, we do not fight anybody or anything. Trying to “flee” in the past, literally or with alcohol or other drugs, didn’t work for us. When we want out of a bad “place,” we go mentally to that good place we imagined earlier, a place of peace and serenity, called the Realm of the Spirit.

4. We ask at the end of every day where we were resentful, fearful, or selfish and dishonest in a relationship. We right any wrong before retiring. Maybe we don’t like doing that, but WE SUFFER TO GET WELL; WE LET THE EGO DIE IN ORDER FOR US TO LIVE.

5. The EGO WILL COME BACK. WE MUST KILL IT AGAIN AND AGAIN. Because it often comes back in a different form from that uncovered in one inventory, we write inventory regularly and we read it to someone who is doing The Work. We use the following forms for that purpose:

RESENTMENT INVENTORY--“People”

COLUMN ONE: NAME _____

COLUMN TWO: What’s wrong with this person that angers / troubles me (Name 3 things, such as: “selfish,” “manipulative,” “controlling,” “dishonest,” “a jerk,” “a nag,” “hit me,” “abandoned me,” “stole my stuff,” etc.):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

COLUMN THREE: Seven areas where this affects me:

1. **Self-esteem** : I am (or see myself as): _____

2. **Pride** : No one should see the following being done to me:

3. **Ambition** : What I want but think I’m losing
is _____

4. **Emotional Security** : To feel OK, I need _____

5. **Financial Security** : My financial security is threatened in this deal because _____

6. **Relations (by Sex)** :

***I think *men* should _____

***I think *women* should _____

7. **Personal Relations** : Those close to me should see that I am _____

COLUMN FOUR: My part in this incident is that I was:

a. *Selfish* (I want to keep what I have, so here’s how I was selfish): _____

b. *Self-Seeking* (I also want what others have, so here’s where I was seeking for my self): _____

c. *Dishonest* (The real truth is that...): _____

d. *Fear* (What I’m really worried about or afraid of that is driving me to behave the way I’m behaving is): _____

e. *Insanity* (Here are the things about my behavior and feelings that are really insane in this deal): _____

RESENTMENT INVENTORY--“Principles/Rules/Laws”

COLUMN ONE: NAME _____

COLUMN TWO: What’s wrong with this person that angers / troubles me (Name 3 things, such as: “selfish,” “manipulative,” “controlling,” “dishonest,” “a jerk,” “a nag,” “hit me,” “abandoned me,” “stole my stuff,” etc.):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

COLUMN THREE: Seven areas where this affects me:

1. **Self-esteem** : I am (or see myself as): _____

2. **Pride** : No one should see the following being done to me: _____

3. **Ambition** : What I want but think I’m losing is _____

4. Emotional Security : To feel OK, I need _____

5. Financial Security : My financial security is threatened in this deal because _____

6. Relations (by Sex):

***I think *men* should _____

***I think *women* should _____

7. Personal Relations : Those close to me should see that I am _____

COLUMN FOUR: My part in this incident is that I was:

a. *Selfish* (I want to keep what I have, so here's how I was selfish): _____

b. *Self-Seeking* (I also want what others have, so here's where I was seeking for my self): _____

c. *Dishonest* (The real truth is that...): _____

d. *Fear* (What I'm really worried about or afraid of that is driving me to behave the way I'm behaving is): _____

e. *Insanity* (Here are the things about my behavior and feelings that are really insane in this deal): _____

RESENTMENT INVENTORY--"Institutions"

COLUMN ONE: NAME _____

COLUMN TWO: What's wrong with this person that angers / troubles me (Name 3 things, such as: "selfish," "manipulative," "controlling," "dishonest," "a jerk," "a nag," "hit me," "abandoned me," "stole my stuff," etc.):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

COLUMN THREE: Seven areas where this affects me:

1. Self-esteem : I am (or see myself as): _____

2. Pride : No one should see the following being done to me: _____

3. **Ambition** : What I want but think I'm losing
is _____

4. **Emotional Security** : To feel OK, I need

5. **Financial Security** : My financial security is threatened in this deal
because _____

6. **Relations (by Sex)**:

***I think *men* should _____

***I think *women* should _____

7. **Personal Relations** : Those close to me should see that I
am _____

COLUMN FOUR: My part in this incident is that I was:

a. *Selfish* (I want to keep what I have, so here's how I was selfish):

b. *Self-Seeking* (I also want what others have, so here's where I was
seeking for my self): _____

c. *Dishonest* (The real truth is that...): _____

d. *Fear* (What I'm really worried about or afraid of that is driving
me to behave the way I'm behaving is): _____

e. *Insanity* (Here are the things about my behavior and feelings that
are really insane in this deal): _____

INVENTORY SUMMARY

Here's how I was inconsiderate: _____

Here's how I aroused . . .

jealousy : _____

suspicion : _____

bitterness : _____

Even though another may have played a part, this is my inventory, so
here's how I was at fault : _____

Here's what I should have done instead: _____

My sane and sound ideal for the future, should anything similar come up again, is to: _____

Selected Bibliography

Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers. Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., New York, New York, 1980.

Congratulations! You've completed the first on many trips through the steps that lead to a better life. We will now present you with your own copy of the guide that you can use to take another group or another individual through the steps. Don't be hesitant to read it exactly as is until you become familiar enough to "wing" some parts.

Those who have gone through the steps once now can take the guide and find another drunk to sit down with and take turns reading alternate pages of the guide and doing the deal together. If you need help at inventory, call one of us in to help the first time or two.

What has worked in the past, and given newcomers an easy chance to get started in doing the necessary 12 step work that we must, is not saying, "Hey, I'll take you through the steps, or "You

need to go through the steps,” “Do you want to work the step,” etc. They are saying instead: "Hey, I got my hands on something that has some neat information about AA and the steps and how they did them originally. How about getting with me and, kinda like a book study, going through it together one-night-a-week for the next month?"

Nothing will so much insure your sobriety and mental health as working with others. Our disease is two-fold problem with a one-part solution, and our goal in this life is also two-fold: (1) we want to stay sane (2) we want to be useful to others who are suffering. God blesses. It's all good, so enjoy. Then, help. Thank you.

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