

OUTLINE OF THE TEXAS STEP STUDY TEAM

1. Purpose

- a. To provide the person who has not worked the Steps with motivation and assistance in “working the Steps” of our AA program of recovery as defined in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.
- b. To provide those who have worked the Steps with the opportunity and motivation to do it again and share their experience, strength and hope.

2. Plan

- a. Teams should be no more than 12 persons (8 - 10 are preferred). Make up each team so that it has about 3 - 4 members who have worked the Steps in the manner described in the Big Book and about 8 - 9 members who have not worked the Steps in this manner, but who are willing to try.
- b. Each team selects its own meeting place and time. Preferably, this should not conflict with the 8PM AA meeting. Team meetings should not be a substitute for AA group activity and fellowship.
- c. Things you’ll need:
 - 1). The book *Alcoholics Anonymous* (called the “Big Book” from this point on).
 - 2). The book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (called the “12&12” from this point on).
 - 3). A notebook. A spiral bound notebook seems to work best.

3. Guidelines

- a. There is no formal meeting format and each group is free to select its own. Most groups rotate the chairperson from week to week and simply discuss the assigned material and share their experiences in applying it to their life.
- b. Prior to coming to the meeting, each member must read and examine the portions of the Big Book and 12&12 relating to the Step under study. Also, prior to the meeting, complete the assignment of answering questions that will be covered in the meeting.
- c. The function of the team will be to apply the principles of each Step to their lives and share their experience in a discussion of each Step.
- d. Each team member is encouraged to use their notebook to record notes, assignments, 4th Step inventory, phone numbers, etc.
- e. A 4th Step will be written and a substantial period of time (all that is needed) will be spent in analysis of this Step and resolving any problems that arise. If any team member encounters any problem that requires additional assistance, it will be available.

4. Initial Meeting

- a. At the first meeting, all present are asked to unite and examine their *commitment*:
- b. Exchange telephone numbers and addresses and select a meeting place.
- c. Commit to stay with the team until all members have completed the Steps.
- d. Commit to do the Steps according to the Big Book as augmented by the 12&12 (including a little act of humility by doing our 3rd Step prayer on our knees).
- e. Those persons who have not done the Steps are asked to commit to do them at least once more with another team (i.e. to freely pass on what has been freely given).
- f. Commit to making telephone or personal contact with one or more members of the team during each week the Steps are being taken and share your problem or experience with the assignment that week.
- g. Commit to attend the meetings. Absences should be **rare** and only caused by **extremely unusual** circumstances. Each member really needs to be present each week. If a member cannot be present, another member should be called and advised of the problem so that the team will not delay the meeting.
- h. After the initial meeting, no one will be added to the team. If someone has a slip or is not living up to their commitment to the team, other members of the team must decide if they want to allow them to continue with the team.

5. Team Participation and Rotation

- a. Participation on a team is on a first come - first served basis.
- b. The estimated time to complete the Steps is about 15 - 20 weeks

- c. When the team has completed the Steps. It will disband.
- d. As teams complete the Steps new teams, with a nucleus of experienced members, will be formed to help newcomers and others who want to participate.

- **Assignment To Prepare For the Initial Meeting**

Read the Preface and Forewords to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd editions of the Big Book (pgs. xi - xxii)

OUTLINE OF THE STEP STUDY AND ASSIGNMENT SHEETS

The following is a suggested study outline with assignments for use by the Step Study Team. Step Study meetings are held on a weekly basis. Prior to each meeting there is an assignment and preparation of answers to questions that will be discussed at the meeting. Each question has a reference to a page in the Big Book or 12&12. By the time the study is completed, each team member will have read the entire basic text of the Big Book.

- **Week 1: Introduction**

Meet and go over the Outline of the Step Study Team. It is very important that the Commitment section of the outline be carefully reviewed and that team members are committing to do the steps. It should be understood that everyone may have one or more absences and perfect attendance is not required. It is most helpful to stress that communication develop among the team members so they know how the other team members are progressing and how they are feeling about the team study.

Note that in the Big Book, the Foreword To First Edition states, "To show other alcoholics *precisely how we have recovered* is the main purpose of this book". This is the task the team is about to undertake in the study and discussion of the Big Book.

Prior to this meeting, team members should have read the forewords to 1st, 2nd and 3rd editions of the Big Book. This meeting covers the "medical estimate of the plan of recovery" in the Big Book.

Read and discuss The Doctor's Opinion at the meeting (pgs. xxiii thru xxx).

1. Were you aware that your alcoholic illness affected both your body and mind (pg. xxiv)?
2. Do you agree with the concept of possible "hospitalization for the alcoholic" (pg. xxiv)?
3. Do you believe, or are you open to accept, the Dr.'s concept of an allergy to alcohol (pg. xxvi)?
4. What is an allergy? Discuss this among the team.
5. What does the Dr. say about "craving", "safe use of alcohol" and "breaking the habit" (pg. xxvi)?
6. Have you experienced the "phenomenon of craving" (pg. xxvi)?
7. Did you like the effect or sensation produced by alcohol (pg. xxvi)?
8. Did you reach the point where you could not "differentiate the true from the false" (pg. xxvi)?
9. Did your alcoholic life "seem the only normal one" (pg. xxvi)?
10. The Dr. suggests the need for a "psychic change". What is a psychic change (xxvii)?
11. The Dr. suggests that alcoholics have "one symptom in common". What is it (pg. xxviii)?
12. Do you accept that alcoholism cannot be "eradicated", that relief is "entire abstinence" (pg. xxviii)?
13. The above and other questions will occur to the group. Each should be discussed in some depth.

- **Assignment for Week 2**

Big Book: read Chapter 1 - Bill's Story.

Be prepared to discuss this story as it applies to your life.

- **Week 2: Chapter 1 - Bill's Story**

Did you ever swear off drinking and then found yourself getting drunk once again (pg. 5)?

1. Like Bill, did you ever wonder "Was I crazy" (pg. 5)?
2. Did you ever feel "remorse, horror and hopelessness" the next morning after a drunk (pg. 6)?
3. Like Bill, did your "brain race uncontrollably" and get a "sense of impending calamity" (pg. 6)?

4. Did you ever just drink to seek oblivion (pg. 6)?
5. Do you agree, “in alcoholics the will is amazingly weakened when it comes to combating liquor, though it often remains strong in other respects” (pg. 7)?
6. In your drinking did you ever sense a loneliness, despair, self-pity or fear (pg. 8)?
Note: Bill talks about the “insidious insanity of that first drink” - why is the first drink so important?
7. What is your attitude to ministers (clergy), the world’s religions or a God personal to you (pg. 10)?
8. What did Bill’s friend suggest that seemed like a “novel idea” (pg. 12)?
9. Bill found that “*nothing more was required of me to make my beginning*”. “*It was only a matter of being willing to*” do what (pg. 12)?
10. Bill “saw that growth could start from that point”? On a foundation of what (pg. 12)?
11. Does it seem like Bill has taken the 1st through 11th Steps from what he describes on pg. 13?
12. Bill says his new way of living is “simple, but not easy”? What “price had to be paid” (pg. 14)?
13. What does Bill say about “faith without works” (pgs. 14 - 15)?
14. What did Bill find out about “working with another alcoholic” (pg. 15)?
15. Bill says our fellowship has “a vast amount of fun about it all”. Are you seeing any of that (pg. 16)?

- **Assignment for Week 3**

Big Book: read Chapter 2 - There Is a Solution.

Be prepared to discuss how you related to this chapter.

- **Week 3: Chapter 2 - There Is a Solution**

The first paragraph says that thousands of men and women, who were just as hopeless as Bill, have recovered through AA. Do you think AA can work for you also (pg. 17)?

1. The second paragraph describes the many kinds of people that make up AA. What seems to be the only requirement for membership in AA (pg. 17)?
2. What is the “great news” the Big Book carries (pg. 17)?
3. Do you really believe that alcoholism is an illness that “involves those about us in a way no other human sickness can” (pg. 18)?
4. Did drinking destroy worthwhile things and engulf other lives that touched yours (pg. 18)??
5. Who can generally “win the entire confidence of another alcoholic” (pg. 18)?
6. Is “elimination of our drinking” the sole end or “but a beginning” to our new way of life (pg. 19)?
7. Can you discuss matters that are medical, psychiatric, social and religious with respect and tolerance of others (pgs. 19 - 20)?
8. Do you believe that we can recover “from a hopeless condition of mind and body” (pg. 20)?
9. Note: on page 20 it states that for someone who wants to get sober, the purpose of the Big Book is to answer the question “What do I have to do?”

There are other questions listed that an alcoholic often gets asked. Have you been asked any of them or asked them of yourself?

What were your answers?

10. From examining yourself the past few weeks and reading the Big Book up to this point - are you a “real alcoholic” (pg. 21)? Note: If you have doubts, be honest and talk it over with the team.
11. Is there a difference between a “hard drinker” and an “alcoholic” (pgs. 20 - 21)?
12. While drinking, did you do any “absurd, incredible or tragic things” (pg. 21)?
13. Do the “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” descriptions roughly fit a description of you (pgs. 21 - 22)?
14. Can an alcoholic’s behavior patterns vary from this Jekyll/Hyde description (pg. 22)?
15. Which drink is it that really causes all our alcoholic suffering and humiliation (pg. 22)?
16. Is there an answer to the riddle of why the alcoholic reacts differently from normal people (pg. 22)?
17. Do you agree that “the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind rather than in his body” (pg. 23)?

18. Even knowing what the results would be, or having alibi's galore, do you really know why your mind allows your hand to pick up that first drink (pg. 23)?
Note: does "insidious insanity of the first drink" make sense in describing the first drink?
19. What is the real fact about assuming that "*power of choice*" or "*will power*" or "*memory of the suffering or humiliation*" is effective in guarding against the first drink (pg. 24)?
20. After taking the first drink did you think you would stop after a certain number (and didn't) or wind up thinking, "what's the use anyhow" (pg. 24)?
25. What does "each individual, in the personal stories, describe in his own language and from his own point of view" (pg. 29)?

Below is an important paragraph that summarizes the AA program of recovery (pg.25)

"The great fact is just this, and nothing less: That we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences* which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life ...".

- **Assignment for Week 4**

Big Book: read Chapter 3 - More About Alcoholism.

Be prepared to answer the questions.

- **Week 4: Chapter 3 - More About Alcoholism**

1. Have you been unwilling to admit you were a real alcoholic (pg. 30)?
2. Did you have the "great obsession of every abnormal drinker" (pg. 30)?
3. Did the illusion of the great obsession persist for you (pg.30)?
4. Have you fully conceded to your innermost self that you are an alcoholic (pg. 30)?
5. Do you think that one day you might be able regain control of your drinking (pg. 30)?
6. Do you believe that alcoholism is a progressive illness that gets worse over time (pg. 30)?
7. Do you think you might be an exception to the rule and not an alcoholic (pg. 31)?
8. Name some methods you have tried to control your drinking and drink like other people (pg. 31)?
9. Can you honestly diagnose yourself about your real ability to control your drinking (pg. 31 - 32)?
10. Do you believe you can start drinking normally again if you first stay sober for a long time (pg. 33)?
11. Do you believe "once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic" (pg. 33)?
12. Does your age, or length of time you drank, necessarily have anything to do with how gravely you may be affected by alcohol (pg. 33)?
13. Do you believe you can stop drinking on your own will power (pg. 34)?
14. Do you believe that the baffling feature of alcoholism as we know it is the "utter inability to leave it alone, no matter how great the necessity or wish" (pg. 34)?
15. Can you be an alcoholic and still have a good family, good job and lots of friends (pg. 35)?
16. In the story about Jim (pgs. 35 - 37) do you understand the strange mental state that preceded his relapse into drinking? Does this story help describe "the insanity of the first drink"?
17. Have you ever come up with some "insanely trivial excuse for taking the first drink" (pg. 37)?
18. In the story about the jaywalker, if you substituted drinking alcohol for jaywalking, does the story describe you (pg. 38)?
19. Do you understand why an alcoholic will be *absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge* (pg. 39)?
20. In the story about Fred, are you having doubts believing you are an alcoholic or have doubts about accepting a spiritual remedy for the problem of alcoholism (pg. 39)?
21. Fred found out the hard way that he had what kind of mind (pgs 41)?
22. Did "willpower" or "self-knowledge" help Fred with his "strange mental blank spots" (pg. 42)?
23. Fred gets 12th-Stepped by two AA members. Have you ever been 12th-Stepped by one or more members of AA (pgs. 42 - 43)?

24. Do you believe that “the alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink” (pg. 43)?

25. Where must the “defense” come from (pg. 43)?

• **Assignment for Week 5**

Big Book: read Chapter 4 - We Agnostics.

Be prepared to answer the questions.

• **Week 5: Chapter 4 - We Agnostics**

1. Have the preceding chapters taught you something about alcoholism (pg. 44)?
2. Have the preceding chapters helped you see the difference between the alcoholic and nonalcoholic (pg. 44)?
3. Do you believe you suffer “from an illness, which only a spiritual experience will conquer” (pg. 44)?
4. The alternatives spelled out for “an alcoholic of the hopeless variety” are “an alcoholic death or to live on a spiritual basis”. Do you think that’s an exaggeration or do you agree (pg. 44)?
5. Is a “code of morals or better philosophy of life sufficient to overcome alcoholism” (pgs 44 - 45)?
6. Do you believe that “lack of power, was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live by and it had to be a Power greater than ourselves” (pg. 45)?
7. The “main object” of the Big Book is to enable you to find what (pg. 45)?
8. Have you had, or do you have, “honest doubts and prejudices” about God (pg. 45)?
9. What has been your reaction to the word “God” (pg. 45)?
10. Have you ever abandoned the idea of God entirely (pg. 45)?
11. Are you able to “lay aside prejudice and express even a willingness to believe in a Power greater than ourselves” (pg. 46)? If not, talk about it to the team.
12. Are you relieved that your “own conception, however inadequate”, is sufficient for a start (pg. 46)?
13. Do you now, or are you even willing, to believe there is a Power greater than yourself (pg. 47)?
14. Do you recognize that when you say “yes” that you are on your way to spiritual growth (pg. 47)?
15. Read Appendix II - Spiritual Experience. What *essentials of recovery ... are indispensable?*
16. Can you cast aside prejudice and be “open minded on spiritual matters” (pg. 48)?
17. Do the stories after pg. 164 tell us how they found a power greater than themselves (pg. 50)?
18. Did your ideas work? Do you think the “God idea” will work for you (pg. 52)?
19. Can you fearlessly face the proposition: “God is everything or else He is nothing. God either is, or He isn’t” (pg. 53)? What is your choice to be?
20. Do you believe that “When we drew near to Him He disclosed Himself to us!” (pg. 57)?

• **Assignment for Week 6**

Big Book: read Chapter 5 - How It Works (pgs. 58 - 63. up through Step 3).

Be prepared to answer the questions.

• **Week 6: Chapter 5 - How It Works (pgs. 58 - 63)**

This part of How It Works is discussed up through the 3rd Step.

1. Are you willing to try to completely give yourself to our simple program of recovery (pg. 58)?
2. Are you willing to try to develop “a manner of living that demands rigorous honesty” (pg. 58)?
3. Are you “willing to go to any length” to get sobriety through our program of recovery (pg. 58)?
4. Do you accept that God can provide the needed power to overcome alcoholism (pg. 59)?
5. Can you avoid half measures and “ask His protection and care with complete abandon” (pg. 59)?

6. Are you willing to take the 12 Steps of Recovery in the order they are written (pg. 59 - 60)?
7. Are the 12 Steps too big an order for you to go through with (pg. 60)?
8. Do you understand that “we claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection” (pg. 60)?
9. From all the parts of the Big Book that you have studied up to now:
 - a. Are you an alcoholic who cannot manage your own life (pg. 60)?
 - b. Do you think any kind of human power can relieve you of your alcoholism?
 - c. Do you believe that God could and would if he were sought?
12. Are you ready to turn your will and life over to the care of God *as you understand Him* (pg. 60)?
13. What is the first requirement of Step 3 (pg. 60)?
14. Are you like the “actor who wants to run the whole show” (pgs. 60 - 62)?
15. What do we think is the “root of our troubles”? What is it driven by (pg. 62)?
16. Above everything what problem must we be rid of - or what will it do to us (pg. 62)?
17. Who makes it possible to rid ourselves of this problem (pg. 62)?
18. As the new power flows in, what do we come to enjoy (pg. 63)? What do we discover?
19. Are you willing to pray to your Maker, *as you understand Him* as suggested in Step 3 (pg. 63)?
20. Who do we find it very desirable to take this spiritual Step with (pg. 63)?

Many study teams, at this point, commit to one another that they are going to take Step 3 and recite the prayer on page 63 humbly on their knees.

- **Assignment for Week 7**

Big Book: read Chapter 5 - How It Works (pgs. 63 - 71 on Step 4).

Be prepared to answer the questions.

- **Week 7: Chapter 5 - How It Works (pgs. 63 - 71)**

Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, which many of us have never attempted.

Though our decision [Step 3] was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us [Step 4].

Our liquor was but a symptom. So we had to get down to causes and conditions.

1. In getting down to “causes and conditions” does it make sense to you to compare your personal inventory to a business inventory (pg. 64)?
2. Would you agree that if we are to be successful, we cannot fool ourselves about values (pg. 64)?
3. What is the “number one” offender that destroys more alcoholics than anything else (pg. 64)?
4. What stems from this “number one” offender (pg. 64)?
5. What do we list on paper about this “number one” offender (pg. 64)?
6. Have you had resentments where your self-esteem, pocketbook, ambitions, personal relationships (including sex) were hurt or threatened (pgs. 64 - 65)?
7. Does the example of an inventory on pg. 65 show how to be definite? Will you do it this way?
8. When we do our inventory, nothing counts but what (pg. 65)?
9. How far did most of us ever get with resentments? What was the usual outcome (pg. 66)?
10. “A life, which includes deep resentment, leads to what” (pg. 66)?
11. The “business of resentment” is what? What happens due to resentments (pg. 66)?
12. If we were to live, what must we be free of (pg. 66)?

13. From our inventory, what can we begin to see about the world and its people (pg. 66)?
14. What is to be our course to overcome resentments against people (pg. 66 - 67)?
15. When a person offended us, what prayer are we to say to ourselves (pg. 67)?
16. What do we avoid (pg. 67)? Why?
17. Will God show us how to help people that offend us (pg. 67)? Are you willing to try this approach?
18. When we forget about the wrongs others had done and look for our own mistakes, whose inventory do we then start taking (pg. 67)?
19. Can fear corrode our lives and lead us to misfortune and trouble (pg. 66 - 67)?
20. When asking why we had fears, what turns out to have “failed us” (pg. 68)?
21. Perhaps there is a better way to deal with fears - who can we try to trust and rely on (pg. 68)?
22. “The verdict of the ages is that faith means what” (pg. 69)?
23. How do we “at once commence to outgrow fear” (pg. 68)?
24. Read page 68, starting with the words “Now about sex”, and continue reading up to page 70 where it sums up about sex. Draw up your own questions. (Note: the 12&12, on pgs. 50 - 51, has some excellent examples of questions).
25. If we are thorough about our personal inventory, and list and analyze our resentments, what are some of the things we can comprehend and learn (pg. 70)?
26. Do you believe “that God can remove whatever self-will has blocked you off from Him” (pg. 71)?
27. Are you willing to swallow and digest “some big chunks of truth about yourself” (pg. 71)?
28. Should you throw away your inventory or save it to use in Steps 5 through 10?

To repeat the paragraph that you read at the beginning of this assignment:

Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, which many of us have never attempted. Though our decision was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face and be rid of, the things in ourselves, which had been blocking us. Our liquor was but a symptom. So we had to get down to causes and conditions.

The next sentence says, “Therefore, we started upon a personal inventory. *This was Step 4*”.

- **Assignment**

Use the Step 4 Inventory Guide that begins on the next page and start your personal inventory.

STEP 4 INVENTORY GUIDE

Many readers find the instructions for Step 4 in the Big Book somewhat confusing or complex. This guide offers an approach of certain AA members to apply the Big Book instructions and their experience of taking Step 4 in the manner suggested in the Big Book. Those who have taken Step 4 as suggested in the Big Book (including the inventory, analysis and prayer) found it to be a rewarding and spiritual experience.

This experience is available to anyone willing to follow the instructions in this guide to the best of their ability and in the order which they are given. Perfection is not required but a good effort involving honesty, open-mindedness and willingness is essential.

- You’ll need the following for the inventory: 1 - a Big Book, 2 - a 12&12 and 3 - a spiral notebook.

Time and Purpose of Step 4

Perhaps the greatest promise all through the Big Book is “God *as you understand Him* will do for you what you cannot do for yourself”. This carries the obvious condition that you must do what you can.

The Big Book cautions that though the decision we made in Step 3 was a vital and crucial, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves, which had been blocking us [from turning over our will and life to God]. Our liquor was but a symptom. So we had to get down to causes and conditions. Therefore we started upon a personal inventory. *This was Step Four*.

- Instructions for Step 4 are in pages 63 - 71 of the Big Book. Read them carefully at this point.

What Do We Seek

A business which takes no regular inventory usually goes broke. Taking a commercial inventory is a fact-finding and fact-facing process. It is an effort to discover the truth about the stock-in-trade. One object is to disclose damaged or unsalable goods, to get rid of them promptly and without regret. If the owner of the business is to be successful, he cannot fool himself about values.

We did exactly the same thing with our lives. We took stock honestly. First we searched out the flaws in our make-up, which caused our failure. Being convinced that self, manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us we considered its common manifestations (pg. 64).

- There are 3 parts of the inventory: resentment, fear and sex.
- Do them one at a time and in order: resentment 1st, fear 2nd and sex 3rd.

Resentment

Resentment is the “number one” offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stems all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have been spiritually sick. When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically. In dealing with resentments we set them on paper.

First Things First - Make Up a Grudge List

Prior to the inventory and its analysis, use a blank notebook page to make up a “grudge list”.

1. List people, institutions or principles (main beliefs) with whom you are, or were, angry.
2. If you recall a resentment then note it down, even if you think you may be over it.
3. Go back through your life. Nothing counts but thoroughness and honesty.
4. You can add to the grudge list at any time.
5. But don't spend too much time worrying how complete the grudge list is.
6. Simply do the best you can over a reasonable period of time (perhaps a week).

Analysis of Resentment

After completing the grudge list (and not before) each resentment must be analyzed. Step 4 will mean little unless you try to understand each resentment and learn from it. The following procedure has proven helpful in this understanding and analysis:

1. Open your notebook so that you have a blank page on either side. Use a ruler or straightedge to divide each page vertically. When both pages are divided, you will have a total of four (4) columns.
2. Use the example of the inventory on pg. 65 of the Big Book as your guide.
3. Enter a name from the grudge list into the 1st column.
4. Ask why you are (or were) angry and write a brief paragraph in the 2nd column. In most cases it was found that our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions, our personal relationships (including sex) were hurt or threatened.
5. What do you think were your “injuries” (or what was affected)? Write this down in the 3rd column. Was it your self-esteem, security, ambitions, your personal, or sex relations that had been interfered with? Honestly consider “fear” and whether it also fueled the resentment. You can also add other things that were injured, such as “pride”.
6. For each entry on your grudge list fill out the first 3 columns of the inventory.
7. When you are done pause here and Read the Big Book from the bottom of pg. 65 up to the 2nd paragraph of pg. 67.
8. Go back through the inventory of resentment you've written down and “consider it carefully”. Ask yourself these questions about each resentment (and each event causing it). Write a brief paragraph reflecting your answers:
 - a. Having determined who was at fault, did I go further in my study of this event?
 - b. Did I try to retaliate, fight back or run? What was the result? Did it help?
 - c. Is it plain that resentment leads to futility and unhappiness in my life?
 - d. Has the resentment ever benefited me in any way?
 - e. Have I squandered worthwhile hours by thinking about it and hanging on to the resentment?
 - f. Have the feelings of the resentment shut me off from “the sunlight of the Spirit”.
9. Do you understand that resentment can lead you to the insanity of alcohol and the first drink? And with us, to drink is to die!
10. Do you begin to see that through our thoughts and reactions to people, places and things “the world and its people really dominated us”? Do you understand that, until we progress beyond the point of just blaming others, there can be no growth or solution?
11. Can you forgive?

12. Do you recognize that other people have the same problems with life that you have, and that many of them are spiritually sick?
13. Honestly pray the “4th Step prayer”:

God help me show _____ the same tolerance, pity and patience I would grant to a sick friend.

This is a sick man, how can I be helpful to him? Save me from being angry. Thy will be done.

The Beginning of Growth

With the alcoholic, whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of resentment is infinitely grave. We found that it is fatal. For when harboring such feelings we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit. The insanity of alcohol returns and we drink again. And with us to drink is to die.

Return to your inventory and enter the title “*My faults and mistakes*” in the 4th column.

1. Put out of your mind the wrongs others had done and look for your own mistakes. Ask yourself:
 - a. Where have I been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking or frightened?
 - b. Where was I to blame?
2. Complete the 4th column for each entry in the inventory.
 - When you finish with all the instructions for resentment (and not before) then proceed to fear.

Fear

This short word somehow touches about every aspect of our lives. We reviewed our fears thoroughly.

1. Read the Big Book instructions on fear from the last paragraph on pg. 67 up thru the 2nd paragraph on pg. 68. See if the word “fear” appears in your resentment inventory. Review your fears thoroughly. Put them down on paper even though you had no resentment in connection with them. Ask yourself why you had the fears. Wasn’t it because self-reliance failed us? Some of us once had great self-confidence, but it didn’t solve the fear problem, or any other. When it made us cocky, it was worse.
2. When your fears have been listed, follow the Big Book instructions on pg. 68 to find “a better way”. We are now on a different basis - the basis of trusting and relying upon God. He enables us to match calamity with serenity. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. (*God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, The courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference*).
2. Review each fear and its cause on your inventory. Pray to God:

God I ask You to remove my fear and show me what You would have me do.

Now About Sex

Many of us needed an overhauling here. But above all we tried to be sensible on this question.

We do not want to be the arbiter of anyone’s sex conduct. We all have sex problems. We’d hardly be human if we didn’t. What can we do about them?

1. Read the Big Book instructions from the last paragraph on pg. 68 thru the 3rd paragraph on pg. 70. Also read the 12&12 from the 2nd paragraph on pg. 50 thru the 1st paragraph on pg. 51.
2. Since Step 4 is but the beginning of a lifetime practice, it can be suggested that we first have a look at those personal flaws which are acutely troublesome and fairly obvious. Using your best judgment of what has been right and what has been wrong, make a rough survey of your conduct with respect to your primary instincts for sex, security and society. Looking back over your life you can readily get under way by consideration of questions such as these:

Big Book: Where had I been selfish, dishonest or inconsiderate?

Whom have I hurt?

Did I unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness?

Where was I at fault, what should I have done instead?

12&12: What people were hurt and how badly (did I spoil my marriage and injure my children)?

Did I jeopardize my standing (in the community, on the job, with my family or friends)?

Just how did I react to these situations at the time?

Did I burn with a guilt that nothing could extinguish?

Did I insist I was the pursued and not the pursuer, and thus absolve myself?

How have I reacted to frustration in sexual matters?

When denied, did I become vengeful or depressed? Did I take it out on other people?

If there was rejection or coldness at home, did I use this as a reason for promiscuity?

To sum up about sex: We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity and for strength to do the right thing. If sex is very troublesome, we throw ourselves the harder into helping others. We think of their needs and we work for them. This takes us out of ourselves. It quiets the imperious urge, when to yield would mean heartache.

Summary

If we have been thorough about our personal inventory, we have written down a lot. We have listed and analyzed our resentments. We have begun to comprehend their futility and their fatality. We have commenced to see their terrible destructiveness. We have begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even our enemies, for we look on them as sick people. We have listed the people we hurt by our conduct and are willing to straighten out the past if we can.

In the Big Book you read again and again that faith did for us what we could not do for ourselves. We hope you are convinced now that God can remove whatever self-will has blocked you off from Him. If you have already made a decision and an inventory of your grosser handicaps you have made a good beginning. That being so you have swallowed some big hunks of truth about yourself.

Having made our personal inventory, what shall we do about it (pg. 72)?

That will be the focus of the next part of the Step Study - Step 5.

- **Assignment**

After sharing your 5th Step, read Chapter 6 - Into Action (pgs. 72 - 75 on Step 5) in the Big Book.

Be prepared to answer the questions.

- **Week 13: Chapter 6 - Into Action**

1. What have we been “trying to get” and to do in Step 4 (pg. 72)?
2. What are we about to do with the “weak items in our inventory”? What does it require (pg. 72)?
3. We may want to skip Step 5. What is the best reason for taking Step 5 (pg. 72)?
4. Is a complete housecleaning important to stay sober (pg. 73)?
5. Are you like the actor described on pg. 73? Did you lead a double life?
6. Have you ever been shocked or frightened by things you did on your drinking sprees (pg. 73)?
7. What causes many in the medical profession to have a low opinion of the chance for recovery of alcoholics (pg. 73)?
8. What must we do “if we expect to live long and happy in this world” (pgs. 73 - 74)?
9. Think well about it - who do you think you should take your 5th Step with (pg. 74)?
10. What is “the rule” for Step 5 (pgs. 74)?
11. This Step may postponed only if we what (pg. 74)?
12. Do you use your “written inventory” in doing Step 5 (pg. 75)?
13. Is it an exaggeration to say that Step 5 is “a life-and-death errand” (pg. 75)?
14. Once we have taken Step 5 “withholding nothing” what can happen (pg. 75)?
15. After returning home from Step 5, what do we do and whom do we thank (pg. 75)?
16. Is your Step work solid so far up to this point?
17. Have you taken Step 5? If not, when do you plan to do it?

- **Assignment**

Big Book: read Chapter 6 - Into Action (pg. 76 on Step 6) 1st paragraph.

12&12: read Step Six.

Be prepared to answer the questions.

• **Week 14: Chapter 6 - Into Action and Step Six from the 12&12**

1. What is emphasized as “indispensable” in Step 6 (pg. 76)?
2. What should you ask from God if you “cling to something and will not let go” (pg. 76)?
See Step 6 in the 12&12 for the rest of the questions below
3. Do you believe that Step 6 “separates the men from the boys” (pg. 63)?
4. Do you agree that we should try Step 6 “repeatedly” on all our faults (pg. 63)?
5. Do you believe “God can and will, under certain conditions, remove defects of character” (pg. 63)?
6. Do you believe that “if we ask, God will certainly forgive” (pg. 65)?
7. In return to God, what must “we try as best we know how to” (pg. 65)?
8. Is Step 6 “AA’s way of stating the best possible attitude we can take” (pg. 65)?
9. In terms of being entirely ready, what’s the best we can likely do (pgs. 65 - 66)?
10. What must we recognize now about some of our defects (pg. 66)?
11. In the discussions on pride, greed, lust, anger, gluttony and sloth (in pgs. 66 - 67) do you see how we can fool ourselves with these character defects? Some examples (have you done them):
 - a. Let greed masquerade as ambition or pretend romance to satisfy lust?
 - b. Use self-righteous anger to feel superior (pride)?
 - c. Use gossip to perform character assassination (anger, envy)?
 - d. Wish for what I don’t have instead of accepting it or working for it (envy, gluttony, sloth)?
 - e. Procrastinate (sloth)?
12. What is the only Step that can be “practiced with absolute perfection” (pg. 68)?
13. The remaining 11 Steps are “the measuring sticks by which we measure our” what (pg. 68)?
14. For Step 6 “the only urgent thing is that we make a” what and keep what (pg. 68)?
15. If we are to gain any real advantage in the use of Step 6 on problems other than alcohol, we shall need to make a brand new venture into” what (pg. 68)?
16. For Step 6, “the only question will be” what (pg. 68)?
17. In doing Step 6, do you agree that “delay is dangerous and rebellion may be fatal” (pg. 69)?

• **Assignment**

Big Book: read Chapter 6 - Into Action (pg. 76 on Step 7) 2nd paragraph only.

12&12: read Step Seven.

Be prepared to answer the questions.

• **Week 15: Chapter 6 - Into Action and Step Seven from the 12&12**

1. Are you ready to proceed with Step 7 (pg. 76)?
2. Are you ready to let God remove all character defects that stand in the way (pg. 76)?
See Step 7 in the 12&12 for the rest of the questions below
3. Do you dislike the word “humility” or don’t understand what it means (pg. 70)?
4. As an alcoholic, have you made a mess of your life in pursuing “material achievement” or “satisfying basic natural desires” (pg. 71)?
5. What is described as our “crippling handicap” (pg. 71)?
6. What gets lost when we choose “comfort” over “character” (pg. 72)?

7. We likely “never thought of making” what “the daily basis of living” (pg. 72)?
8. “As long as we placed self-reliance first, a genuine reliance on a Higher Power was” what (pg 72)?
9. What is the basic ingredient of all humility (pg. 72)?
10. Can repeated humiliations force us to learn something about humility (pg. 72)?
11. Will admitting “without reservation, that we are powerless over alcohol” be enough “to prevent a retreat into alcoholism once again” (pg. 73)?
12. Can some character defects be easy to hold onto because we still enjoy them too much (pg. 73)?
13. Do you accept the conclusion of AA experience that in ridding ourselves of our character defects, “we surely must try with a will, or else fall by the wayside” (pgs. 73 - 74)?
14. Do you recognize humility as “a necessary aid to our survival” (pg. 74)?
15. Can you begin to look upon humility in way that it doesn’t mean, “forced feeding on humble pie” and view it as “the nourishing ingredient, which can give us serenity” (pg. 74)?
16. Do you accept that immense values “have come straight out of painful ego-puncturing” (pg. 74)?
17. In AA, have you heard stories of “how humility brought strength out of weakness” (pg. 75)?
18. In “learning more about humility” what was “the most profound result of all” (pg. 74)?
19. Is humility something you really want (pg. 75)?
20. “The chief activator of our defects has been” what (pg. 76)?
21. “The whole emphasis of Step 7 is on” what (pg. 76)?
22. Step 7 “is really saying to us that we now ought to be willing to try humility in seeking removal of our other shortcomings just as we did when we” what (pg. 76)?
23. Can humility help us with any problem we could possibly have (pg. 76)?

7th Step Prayer

My Creator, I am now willing that You should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that You now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to You and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.

- **Assignment**

Big Book: Chapter 6 - Into Action (pgs. 76 - 79 on Step 8).

12&12 - Step Eight.

Be prepared to answer the questions.

- **Week 16: Chapter 6 - Into Action and Step Eight from the 12&12**

1. Do you agree with the saying “Faith without works is dead” (pg. 76)?
2. When you did the 4th Step inventory, did you make a list of all persons you had harmed and to whom you were willing to make amends (pg. 76)?
3. If you don’t have the will to make amends are you willing to ask God until it comes (pg. 76)?
4. Do you still agree that you will *go to any lengths for victory over alcohol* (pg. 76)?
5. Do you have any misgivings about making amends (pg. 76)?
6. In making amends, are there some people “we need not, perhaps should not, emphasize the spiritual feature on our first approach” (pg. 76)?
7. What is “our real purpose” in making amends (pg. 77)?
8. Is it wise to avoid “sounding religious” when we approach someone to make amends (pg. 77)?
9. Can you approach those you have hated or disliked “in a helpful and forgiving spirit” (pg. 77)?
10. Can we ever criticize anyone we are going to make amends to (pg. 77)?
11. We will never get over what until we have done our utmost to straighten out the past (pg. 77)?
12. Does it matter if someone rejects our amends or “throws us out of his office” (pg. 78)?

13. Why is it important “we lose our fear of creditors no matter how far we have to go” (pg. 78)?
14. Have you avoided discussing with your sponsor any possible criminal offenses, which may land you in jail if they were known to the authorities (pg. 78)? If yes, then discuss it with your sponsor.
15. For whose sake are we “not to be the hasty and foolish martyr” (pg. 79)?
16. Should you discuss your amends and try to get suggestions prior to attempting them (pg. 79)?
See Step 8 in the 12&12 for the rest of the questions below
17. What is Step 8 (like Step 9) concerned with (pg. 77)?
18. The first, and one of the most difficult obstacles to amends has to do with what (pg. 78)?
19. “Most of us hit another solid obstacle” when? Why (pg. 78)?
20. Can you claim that you never hurt anyone but yourself when you were drinking (pg. 79)?
21. What is the attitude “I only hurt myself” the end result of (pg. 79)?
22. This kind of attitude “can only be changed by” what (pg. 79)?
23. What about cases of amends where we cannot make restitution at all, or cases that should be deferred (pg. 79 - 80)?
24. Can you define the word “harm” in a practical way (pg. 80)?
25. In Step 8, “we shall want to hold ourselves to the course of” what (pg. 81 - 82)?
26. Step 8 is the “beginning of the end” of what (pg. 82)?

- **Assignment**

Big Book: Chapter 6 - Into Action (pgs. 80 - 84 on Step 9).

12&12 - Step Nine.

Be prepared to answer the questions.

- **Week 17: Chapter 6 - Into Action and Step Nine from the 12&12**

1. In Step 9, “before taking drastic action” we consult with who and ask who to help (pg. 80)?
2. If you cheated on your spouse or loved one, should you go tell them all the details (pg. 81)?
3. Is keeping sober the only thing you need to do to make amends (pg. 82)?
4. Is a “remorseful mumbling that we are sorry” enough to “fill the bill” for Step 9 (pg. 81)?
5. What must we do with the spiritual life (pg. 81)?
6. What will convince our family (and others) more than words (pg. 81)?
7. What if there are some wrongs that we can never fully right (pg. 81)?
8. Pgs. 83 - 84 are called “The Promises”. Read them. Which ones are materializing for you?
9. In the promises, “we will suddenly realize” what (pg. 84)?
10. How soon do the promises happen? How do they materialize (pg. 84)?
See Step 9 in the 12&12 for the rest of the questions below
11. What “are the qualities we shall need when we take Step 9” (pg. 83)
12. Did you “actually begin making certain kinds of direct amends” when you joined AA (pg. 83)?
13. Is it true, that In Step 9 “we must be sure to remember that we cannot buy our own peace of mind at the expense of others” (pg. 84)?
14. In Step 9 “let’s not talk prudence while practicing” what (pg. 85)?
15. The one consideration which should qualify our desire for a complete disclosure will arise in the occasional situation where making a full revelation harms those to “whom we are making amend, Or-quite as important-“ who (pg. 86)?
16. When preparing for amends, do you think it wise to first lay the matter before your sponsor and earnestly ask God’s help and guidance (pg. 86)?

17. If there are any delays in Step 9, what should we be absolutely sure of (pg. 87)?

18. What is the very spirit of Step 9 (pg. 87)?

• **Assignment**

Big Book: Chapter 6 - Into Action (pgs. 84 - 85 on Step 10).

12&12 - Step Ten.

Be prepared to answer the questions.

• **Week 18: Chapter 6 - Into Action and Step Ten from the 12&12**

1. Step 10 “suggests we continue to” what (pg. 84)?

2. What is our code (pg. 84)?

3. By this time what will have returned (pg. 84)?

4. Think of your drinking days. Did a new attitude on alcohol come to you as described in page 85?

5. It is easy to let up spiritually and rest on our laurels and wind up heading for what (pg. 85)?

6. “We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is” what (pg. 85)?

7. What prayer states the “thoughts which must go with us constantly” (pg. 85)?

See Step 10 in the 12&12 for the rest of the questions below

8. “When we approach Step 10 we commence to put our AA way of living to” what (pg. 88)?

9. “Then comes the acid test:”. What is it for us (pg. 88)?

10. Have you ever experienced an “emotional hangover” (pg. 88)?

11. Does Step 10 help us live serenely today and help deal with the past and tomorrow (pg. 88 - 89)?

12. What different kinds of Step 10 inventories can you choose from (pg. 89)?

13. Should you share Step 10 with your sponsor or someone else as in Step 5 (pg. 89)?

14. Do you agree with the spiritual axiom that “every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong *with us*” (pg. 90)?

15. Can a “spot check inventory ... help quiet stormy emotions” (pg. 90)?

16. In Step 10 “our first objective will be the development of” what (pg. 91)?

17. Now that we’re in AA and sober, what should we exercise special vigilance against (pg. 92)?

18. What two character defects have to be abandoned, if only a little at a time (pg. 93)?

19. Can you take Step 10 as a “balance sheet” (assets and liabilities) or do it to end or start your day (pgs. 93 - 94)?

20. “Learning daily to spot, admit and correct flaws is the essence of” what (pg. 95)?

• **Assignment**

Big Book: Chapter 6 - Into Action (pgs. 85 - 88 on Step 11).

12&12 - Step Eleven.

Be prepared to answer the questions.

• **Week 19: Chapter 6 - Into Action and Step Eleven from the 12&12**

1. What does Step 11 suggest what (pg. 85)? Should you be shy on this matter?

2. Have you tried the Step 11 suggestions for retiring at night (pg. 86)?

3. Have you tried the Step 11 suggestions on awakening (pg. 86)?

4. In Step 11 “we are careful to never pray for our own” what (pg. 87)?

5. Can we practice Step 11 as a member of a religious denomination (pg. 87)?

6. How should we come to view religious people (pg. 87)?
7. What in Step 11 do we constantly remind ourselves and humbly say to ourselves (pgs. 87 - 88)?
8. Do you believe “It works - it really does” (pg. 88)?
9. In Step 8 there was a statement about faith. What is repeated here in Step 11 about faith (pg. 88)?
See Step 10 in the 12&12 for the rest of the questions below
10. What “are our principal means of conscious contact with God” (pg. 96)?
11. “Self-examination, meditation and prayer” are an unshakable foundation for” what (pg. 98)?
12. “Self-searching is the means by which we bring new vision, action and grace to” what (pg. 98)?
13. The object of meditation “is always the same: to improve” what (pg. 101)?
14. One of the first fruits of meditation is what (pgs. 101 - 102)?
15. What is prayer (pg. 102)?
16. A request for what part of Step 11 “fits in any part of our day” (pg. 102)?
17. When we pray for specific things, are we asking God to do things our way instead of asking God how to do things His way (pg. 102)? Is this the way to pray? What should we add to this prayer?
18. “In AA we have found that the actual good results of prayer are” what (pg. 104)?
19. Do you ever pass through times when it is very difficult to pray (pg. 105)?
20. Do you believe “that God lovingly watches over us” (pg. 105)?

- **Assignment**

Big Book: Chapter 7 - Working With Others.

Be prepared to answer the questions.

- **Week 19: Chapter 7 - Working With Others**

1. Have you read any stronger statement on insuring “immunity from drinking” than the beginning of Chapter 7?
2. How can we find “drinkers who want to recover” (pg. 89)?
3. What is “our only aim” when seeking out drinkers who want to recover (pg. 89)?
4. What do you do when you find a prospect for AA who “does not want to stop drinking” (pg. 90)?
5. For a prospect, “sometimes it wise to wait until” what (pg. 90)?
6. Should you let a prospect’s family or a friend ask him if he wants to quit drinking for good (pg. 90)?
7. Are there times when a prospect should be hospitalized (pg. 91)?
8. Should a prospect be called on when jittery or depressed (pg. 91)?
9. Should you see your prospect alone (pg. 91)? Note: what about doing 12th Step calls alone?
10. If your prospect wishes to talk, what should you do (pg. 91)?
11. Should we tell someone they are an alcoholic or let them draw their own conclusion (pg. 92)?
12. What should you say if a prospect sticks to the idea that he can control his drinking (pg. 92)?
13. Should you stress the spiritual feature of our program freely (pg. 93)?
14. Do you know how to outline our program of action (pg. 94)?
15. What if the prospect gives reasons why he need not follow the entire AA program or rebels at the thought of a drastic housecleaning (pg. 94)?
16. On the first visit should you leave a copy of the Big Book if the prospect shows interest (pg. 94)?
17. Should you rush a new prospect to proceed at once into AA (pg. 94)?
18. What kind of talk do we never do to an alcoholic (pg. 94)?

19. Under what circumstance may you have to drop a prospect until he changes his mind (pg. 94)?
20. Should a prospect be pushed or prodded by you or family and friends (pg. 95)?
21. What if a prospect wants to try some other way or spiritual approach to get sober (pg. 95)?
22. What do we find is a waste of time in 12th Step work (pg. 96)?
23. How should you deal with a prospect that is broke or homeless (pg. 96)?
24. "Helping others is the foundation stone of your" what (pg. 97)?
25. Being the Good Samaritan every day in 12th Step work may mean what (pg. 97)?
26. Should you offer an alcoholic's family our way of life through cooperation with the fellowship of Al-Anon (pg. 97 also pg. 121)?
27. What is the idea we must burn into the consciousness of every prospect for AA (pg. 98)?
28. What should we remind the prospects who insist they cannot recover unless they get their family back (pg. 99 - 100)?
29. "When working with a man and his family, you should take care not to participate in their" what (pg. 100)? Why?
30. Should we tell a newcomer's family how we solved our own domestic problems (pg. 100)?
31. If we are spiritually fit we can do all sorts of things alcoholics are not supposed to do. Like what (pgs. 100 - 101)?
32. What is our rule about going to a place where there is drinking (pg. 101)?
33. What should you do "if you are with a person who wants to eat in a bar" (pg. 102)?
34. "We should never hesitate to go anywhere if we can be" what (pg. 102)? Should we go alone?
35. Do you agree with the last paragraph of pg. 103?

Chapter 8 - To Wives, Chapter 9 - The Family Afterward, Chapter 10 - To Employers and Chapter 11 - A Vision For You, all teach us how to practice our AA principles in all our affairs. The chapters contain many spiritual ideals which apply to us all and should be read and studied. The group may decide whether or not to discuss one or more of these chapters to conclude the Step Study.

A reading of page 164 of the Big Book is a fitting way to end the Step Study Team. Haven't we really had the benefit of contact with those who wrote this book after all? Haven't we placed our reliance on Him to find recovery? Haven't we found the fellowship that we crave?

- **Assignment**

Find some new AA members who need our program and do another Step Study Team with them.