

**The Doctors Opinion
Dr. William D. Silkworth
"The little doctor who loved drunks"**

— brief narrative about Docotor Sikworth —

BB pg xxiii pr 1>

We of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the reader will be interested in the medical estimate of the plan of recovery described in this book.

..... This man and over one hundred others appear to have recovered.

Dr. Silkworth described his theory as follows....

BB pg xxvi > [Allergy] We believe, and so suggested a few years ago, that **the action of alcohol on these chronic alcoholics is a manifestation of an allergy; that the phenomenon of craving is limited to this class and never occurs in the average temperate drinker.** These allergic types can never safely use alcohol in any form at all; and once having formed the habit and found they cannot break it, once having lost their self confidence, their reliance upon things human, their problems pile up on them and become astonishingly difficult to solve.

The feeling of having shared in a common peril is one element in the powerful cement which binds us. But that in itself would never have held us together as we are now joined.

—————> fellowship & program [different] <—————

The tremendous fact for every one of us is that we have discovered a common solution. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in brotherly and harmonious action. This is the great news this book carries to those who suffer from alcoholism.

"...vital spiritual experience brought about by a program of action."

BB pg 24> [hot stove]

BB pg 25 > There is a solution. Almost none of us liked the self-searching, the leveling of our pride, the confession of shortcomings which the process requires for its successful consummation. But we saw that it really worked in others, and we had come to believe in the hopelessness and futility of life as we had been living it. When, therefore, we were approached by those in whom the problem had been solved, there was nothing left for us but to pick up the simple kit of spiritual tools laid at our feet. We have found much of heaven and we have been **rocketed** into a **fourth** dimension of existence of which we had not even dreamed.

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, toward our fellows and toward God's universe. The **central** fact of our lives today is the absolute certainty that our **Creator** has entered into our **hearts** and **lives** in a way which is indeed miraculous. He has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do by ourselves.

BB pg 25 p 3 >If you are as seriously alcoholic as we were, we believe there is no middle-of-the-road solution. We were in a position where life was becoming impossible, and if we had passed into the region from which there is no return through human aid, we had but two alternatives: One was to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best we could; and the other, to accept spiritual help.

*** Fully explained - Appendix II**

—————> read asterisked footnotes also found on pages 27 & 47.

—————> siritual experience at end of paragraph on page 44.

—————> explain Bills writing methods. Use of Thesaurus.

"writer uses different words to mean approximately the same thing."

spiritual experience
spiritual awakening
personality change
psychic change
religious experience

BB pg xxvii > Appendix II CHANGE

{One reads as other comments.}

BB pg 9 par6 > Ebby

He was sober. It was years since I could remember his coming to New York in that condition. I was amazed. Rumor had it that he had been committed for alcoholic insanity. I wondered how he had escaped. Of course he would have dinner, and then I could drink openly with him. Unmindful of his welfare, I thought only of recapturing the spirit of other days. There was that time we had chartered an airplane to complete a jag! His coming was an oasis in this dreary desert of futility. The very thing - an oasis! Drinkers are like that.

The door opened and he stood there, fresh skinned and glowing. There was something about his eyes. He was inexplicably different. What had happened?

I pushed a drink across the table. He refused it. Disappointed but curious, I wondered what had got into the fellow. He wasn't himself.

"Come, what's all this about? I queried.

He looked straight at me. Simply, but smilingly, he said, "**I've got religion.**"

I was aghast. So that was it - last summer an alcoholic crackpot; now, I suspected, a little cracked about religion. He had that starry-eyed look. Yes, the old boy was on fire all right. But bless his heart, let him rant! Besides, my gin would last longer than his preaching.

But he did no ranting. In a matter of fact way he told how two men had appeared in court, persuading the judge to suspend his commitment. **They had told of a simple religious idea and a practical program of action.** That was two months ago and the result was self evident. **It worked!**

BB pg 42 par2 >

"**Then they outlined the spiritual answer and program of action** which a hundred of them had followed successfully. Though I had been only a nominal churchman, their proposals were not, intellectually, hard to swallow. But the **program of action**, though entirely sensible, was pretty drastic. **It meant I would have to throw several lifelong conceptions out of the window.** That was not easy. But the moment I made up my mind to go through with the process, I had the curious feeling that my alcoholic condition was relieved, as in fact it proved to be.

"Quite as important was the discovery that spiritual principles would solve all my problems."

But we found that such codes and philosophies did not save us, no matter how much we tried. We could wish to be moral, we could wish to be philosophically comforted, in fact, we could will these things with all our might, but the needed power wasn't there. Our human resources, as marshaled by the will, were not sufficient; they failed utterly.

BB pg 46 par2>

We found that as soon as we were able to lay aside prejudice and express even a **willingness** to believe in a Power Greater than **ourselves**, we commenced to get results, even though it was **impossible** for any of us to fully **define** or comprehend that Power, **which is God.**

BB pg 46 ln 29-30>

We found that God does not make to hard terms with those who seek him.

BB pg 28 ln 13-20>

We have no desire to convince anyone that there is only one way by which faith can be acquired. If what we have learned and felt and seen means anything at all, it means that all of us, whatever our race creed or color are the children of a living Creator with whom we may form a relationship upon simple and understandable terms as soon as we are willing and honest enough to try.

BB pg 47 pr 2>

One short question. Do I now believe (agnostic), or am I even willing to believe (atheist), that there is a power greater than myself?

Atheist - Says there is no God. (prays he's right)

Agnostic - Ignores God. A (without) gnostic (knowledge)

True believer - Believes in God! Receives God's power!

How do we find that power?

BB pg 45 > **Well that's exactly what this book is about.**

BB pg 47 par2 >

As soon as a man can say that he does believe, or is willing to believe, we emphatically assure him that he is on his way. It has been repeatedly proven among us that upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built.*

* Please be sure to read Appendix II on "Spiritual Experience."

This quote from Dr. Bob's talk at the 1948 AA Convention in Detroit, appears in several Grapevine issues and other AA publications.

Dr. Bob pg 96>

Dr. Bob noting that there were no Twelve Steps at the time and that "our stories didn't amount to anything to speak of," later said they were convinced that the answer to their problems was in the Good Book. "To some of us older ones, the parts that we found absolutely essential were the Sermon on the Mount, the 13th chapter of First Corinthians, and the Book of James," he said.

Dr. Bob pg 102 >

Hospitalization was another must in the early days. Dr. Bob himself was one of the few exceptions. Even prospects who were fairly well dried out when they asked for help were required to put themselves in private rooms at City Hospital for periods ranging from five to eight days. This approach was emphasized partly because Dr. Bob was a physician who was hospital oriented and believed alcoholism to be a disease. The advantage of having the alcoholic alone in a room as a captive audience also had something to do with it. These patients were allowed only a Bible as reading material. Generally, their only visitors were **recovered** alcoholics.

This was so much a part of the treatment that Warren C., who came to A.A. in Cleveland in July 1939, recalled that there was considerable debate about whether he should be admitted to the fellowship, since he had *not* been hospitalized.

So when an A.A. mentions now that they didn't rush the Steps or have all this hospitalization when he came into the program, he's talking about the old days -- not the *old* old days.

Dr. Bob pg 168 >Clarence in Cleveland, early summer 1939 SPONSORSHIP

"We intend to stress the hospitalization of all cases possible. In fact, we are trying to make it almost 100 percent. The man who lines up the new patient assumes the responsibility for him, for visitors, for dollars, etc. After he is defogged, we feel him out, then **give him the book** and lots of conversation. Our book certainly has been a tremendous help. We also contact the family when he is in the hospital and **give them conversation and the book**. We have the experience of New York and Akron before us to guide us, and we feel that we are now on a very good footing. Hope you and Bill can get out this way soon and meet our gang and give us some of your experience and wisdom.

BB pg 49 par2 >

Instead of regarding ourselves as intelligent agents, spearheads of God's ever advancing Creation, we agnostics and atheists chose to believe that our human intelligence was the last word, the alpha and the omega, the beginning and end of all. Rather vain of us, wasn't it?

We, who have traveled this dubious path, beg you to lay aside prejudice, even against organized religion. many

spiritually-minded persons of all races, colors, and creeds were demonstrating a degree of stability, happiness and usefulness which we should have sought ourselves.

"Let's look at the record."

BB pg 50 par4 >Here thousands of men and women found that a new power, peace, happiness, and sense of direction flowed into them. **(Page 63)** This happened **soon after** they wholeheartedly met a **few simple requirements. (pg 25)**

BB pg 51 par1 > Leaving aside the drink question, they tell why living was so unsatisfactory. They show how the change came over them. When many hundreds of people are able to say that the consciousness of the Presence of god is today the most important fact in their lives, they present a powerful reason why one should have faith.

1 Kings 18:21

Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waiver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God follow him."

1 Kings 18:21

Bridge of Reason to desired shore of faith.

... promise of the **New Land**

Biblical symbolism.

Romans 1:18,19 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities -- his eternal power and divine nature -- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

**No wonder our hearts are daily summoned
to behold Him there!**

For by beholding, we are changed.

It's a matter of fact,

it's a matter of power.

**And isn't it a fact that your life is ready for
that power now?**

So why not come now to the Vine.

And live the life of the truly bold and beautiful?

Are there any questions on step two???

Would all who care to please join me in a **step two prayer:**

Heavenly Father,
I ask you now for the honesty, open mindedness and
willingness to come to believe in a power greater
than myself that can restore me to sanity.
Please reveal to me the power that can help solve
all my problems, a power by which I can live.
In Jesus name - Amen

Additional scriptures:

Psalms 34:18-22

Mathew 14:22-34

Mathew 17:20

Mark 9:23-24

John 8:32

John 14:26

II Corinthians 1:9

II Corinthians 3:5

Philippians 2:13

Bill wrote the Twelve Steps, he said, while lying in bed at 182 Clinton Street with pencil in hand and pad of yellow scratch paper on his knee. He wrote them in bed, said Lois, not because he was really sick, but he wasn't feeling well, and if he could lie down, he did: "He got into bed, that being the best place to think."

PIO pg 198 ...he asked for guidance.

As he started to write, he asked for guidance. and he relaxed. The words began tumbling out with astonishing speed. He completed the first draft in about half an hour, then kept on writing until he felt he should stop and review what he had written. Numbering the new steps, he found that they added up to twelve -- a symbolic number; he thought of the Twelve Apostles, and soon became convinced that the Society should have twelve steps.

The very first draft of the Twelve Steps, as Bill wrote them that night, has been lost. This is an approximate reconstruction of the way he first set them down.

Read:

PIO pg 198,199 > Original How It Works

Bill's first three steps were culled from his reading of James, the teachings of Sam Shoemaker, and those of the Oxford Group. The first step had to do with calamity and disaster; the second was admission of defeat -- that one could not go on living on the strength of one's own resources; and the third was an appeal to a Higher Power for help.

... two late callers that evening.....

close friend Horace C. and with him a "newcomer, dry barely three months." the two men had some objections: to the frequent use of the word "God" and to asking on one's knees to have one's shortcomings removed.

local members.... heated discussion Jimmy B.

BB pg 60 > Being convinced, ...
 what do we do?

Will - our mind (thinking apparatus)

Life - our actions (I am the sum total of all my actions)

"All action is born in thought." - Charley and Joe

So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making. They arise out of ourselves, and the alcoholic is an extreme example of self-will run riot, though he usually doesn't think so. Above everything, we alcoholics **must be rid of this selfishness**. We **must**, or it kill us! God makes that possible.

Dr. Bob pg 97 >There was hardly a night [during the three months of Bill's stay in the summer of 1935] that we didn't sit up until two or three o'clock, talking.

"We already had **the basic ideas**, though not in terse and tangible form. We got them ... as a result of our **study of the Good Book**.
.....

"all this happened..... it was providentially arranged.

Dr. Bob pg 111 > "We had much prayer together in those days and began quietly to read Scripture and discuss a practical approach to its application in our lives," he said.

Dr. Bob pg 101 > On the other hand, we were taking them upstairs and getting them **on their knees to surrender**, which I felt was a very important part."

"The surrender was more than important; it was a **must**"

"There you can see the beginning of the Twelve Steps," he said, "We called that **the surrender**. **They demanded it.**"

Dr. Bob pg 101 > I often wonder how many people that come in now would survive an experience like that -- a regular old fashioned prayer meeting," said Dorothy, who was then married to an A.A. member, Clarence S., and later came into A.A. herself. (She died in 1971.) "The newcomers surrendered in the presence of all those other people." after the surrender, many of the steps -- involving inventory, admission of character defects, and making restitution --- were taken within a matter of days."

Dr. Bob pg 118 > "I enjoyed those men coming to see me."

.....in the first draft of the twelve steps, people were to be on their knees when they surrendered. but the other drunks made Bill take it out."

Dr. Bob pg 143-144 > Doc Smith came in... [Clarence]

....."Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Dr. Bob pg 139 >"After the meeting" T. Henry continued, we might take the new man upstairs....

..... During the prayer, he usually made a declaration of his willingness to turn his life over to God."

BB pg 63 par 1 >As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, as we became conscious of His presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. We were reborn.

Are there any questions on Step 3???

{Handout - Third Step Prayer}

How do we do the third step? ---

Please join me on your knees for a third step prayer.

Use: BB pg 63 OR Long Form Handout

OR Heavenly Father,
I turn my will and my life over to you. Mold me and do with me as you will. I trust you to guide my steps, as I enter the world with hope that I may better do your will. I ask for your forgiveness and acceptance. I welcome your Holy Spirit Power, love, and guidance in everything I do and say.
In Jesus name - Amen

2 Cor. 5:17 New Creation

Step 1- willingness - foundation
Step 2 - Believe - cornerstone
Step 3 - Decision - keystone

We have now completed step 3. Agree??

1 1/2 hours

STEP FOUR

WHAT MAKES ME TICK?

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

BB pg 63-64 >Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, which many of us had 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 **to 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.

Therefore, we started upon a personal inventory. This was *Step Four*.

Blocking us from what?

BB pg 66 the **sunlight of the spirit**.

Dr. Bob pg 227 par 8 >The widow of an oldtimer remembered Dr. Bob standing up at the meeting **with "the Good Book under his arm"** and recalled that he used to say **the answers were there** if you looked for them, because people back in the Old Testament were just like the people of this century and had the same problems.

And if he were here now, Dr. Bob might say the same thing about the early A.A.'s--that they were just like the members today and had the same problems.

Dr. Bob donated that Bible to the King School Group, where it still rests on the podium at each meeting. Inside is an inscription: "It is the hope of the King School Group--whose sobriety this is--that this Book may never cease to be a source of wisdom, gratitude, humility, and guidance, as when fulfilled in the life of the Master." It is signed "Dr. Bob Smith."

....."Dr. Bob was the first group leader I heard refer simply and without ostentation to God. **He cited the Sermon on the Mount as containing the underlying spiritual philosophy of A.A.**"

There is a lot of confusion about step 4.

Many people have died because they did not get past Step four.

SEARCHING & FEARLESS

Fearless means without fear.

BB PG 64 > OUR DECISION COULD HAVE LITTLE PERMANENT EFFECT UNLESS AT ONCE FOLLOWED BY

Instructions for step 4 are so short we often overlook them.

BB pg 62 > **Selfishness - self-centeredness!**.....
...we must or it kills us. God makes that possible.

BB pg 64 > **Resentment is the "number one offender"**...

In dealing with resentments we set them on paper.

ANY

RE - |again

inconsiderate
harmful conduct

BB pg 67 par3

when we saw our faults (col 4)
we admitted our wrongs (col 3)
were willing(step 8 & 9)
to set these matters (col1 & 2)

Step 5 exact nature(col 4) of our wrongs (col 3)
Step 6 defects of character
step 7 shortcomings
Chap 6 obstacles in our path

nature - inherent characteristics
(real truth)

BB pg 67 >Notice that the word "fear" is bracketed alongside the difficulties with Mr. Brown, Mrs. Jones, the employer, and the wife. This short word somehow touches about every aspect of our lives. It was an evil and corroding thread; the fabric of our existence was shot through with it. It set in motion trains of circumstances which brought us misfortune we felt we didn't deserve. But did not we, ourselves, set the ball rolling?

BB pg 68 > **We reviewed our fears thoroughly**

We put them on paper

BB pg 68 par3 > We never apologize to anyone for depending upon our Creator. We can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. **All men of faith have courage.** They trust their God. **We never apologize for God.** Instead we let Him demonstrate, through us, what He can do. We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear.

BB pg 68 par4 > **Now about sex.**

BB pg 69 par1 > We reviewed our own conduct...

In this way we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life. We subjected each relation to this test - was it selfish or not? **We asked God to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them. We remembered always that our sex powers were God-given and therefore good, neither to be used lightly or selfishly nor to be despised and loathed.**

Whatever our ideal turns out to be, we must be willing to grow toward it. We must be willing to make amends where we have done harm, provided that we do not bring about still more harm in so doing. In other words, we treat sex as we would any other problem. In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come, if we want it. God alone can judge our sex situation.

BB pg 70 par 1 > Suppose we fall short...

par 2 > To sum up about sex

analyzed - (get down to the truth of it)

BB pg 70 par 3 > Harmful conduct other than sex.

We have listed the people...are willing(step 8)...if we can.

...faith did for us what we could not do for ourselves.

**Convinced now that God can (step 2)
already made a decision (step 3)
and an inventory (step 4)
of our grosser handicaps (three part inventory)
(resentments,fears, harmful conduct)**

...truth about yourself.

Dr. Bob pg 54,55> At the core of the program were the "four absolutes": absolute honesty, absolute unselfishness, absolute purity, and absolute love.

.....

In addition to the four absolutes, the Oxford Groupers had the "five C's" and the "five procedures." the C's were confidence, confession, conviction, conversion, and continuance, while the procedures were: Give in to God; listen to God's direction; check guiddance; restitution; and sharing -- for witness and for confession."

Are there any questions on Step four??

Can we agree that we understand how to do step four and are ready to do it.

You have made a good beginning.

Would everyone who has not done a Big Book Fourth Step please
Have it done by this time next week?

Those who are going to do another one at this time please do it to.

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[rev.97-05-11 pln] [rev.98-01-27 Pub. pln]

STEP TWO THE POWER THAT WORKS

**Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
The Oxford Groups First Step is our Third Step.
Our first two steps were originally done before
invitation to join the group.**

We are average Americans. All sections of this country and many of its occupations are represented, as well as many political, economic, social, and religious backgrounds. We are people who normally would not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful. We are like the passengers of a great liner the moment after rescue from shipwreck when camaraderie, joyousness and democracy pervade the vessel from steerage to Captain's table. Unlike the feelings of the ship's passengers, how ever, our joy in escape from disaster does not subside as we go our individual ways.

PIO pg 128 >

They felt that when people Commenced to adhere to these high moral standards, **then God could enter and direct their lives.**

Under these conditions, **every individual could receive specific guidance**, which could inspire every decision and act of living, great or small.

BB pg 25 par3 >If you are as seriously alcoholic as we were, we believe there is no middle-of-the-road solution. We were in a

position where life was becoming impossible, and if we had passed into the region from which there is no return through human aid, we had but two alternatives: One was to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best we could; and the other, to accept spiritual help.

BB pg 29 par 1 > Further on, **clear-cut** directions are given showing how we **recovered**.

BB pg 43 pr 4>

Once more: The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink. Except in a few cases, neither he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. His defense must come from a Higher Power.

"You can't heal a sick mind with a sick mind.

You MUST have a vital spiritual experience."

BB pg 44 pr 4>

If a mere code of morals or a better philosophy of life were sufficient to overcome alcoholism, many of us would have **recovered** long ago.

BB pg 45 par 1 > **Lack of power**, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a Power greater than ourselves. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this Power?

Well, **that's exactly what this book is about**. Its **main object** is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem.

"It is neither magic nor mystery. But it is a matter of power, the very power we need to live on the cutting edge of victory."

The Claim pg 116

Bill did not intend the steps to be suggestions, they were directions.

The program is suggested as a program of recovery.

The steps are THAT PROGRAM of recovery.

BB pg 43 > **Once more.....**

BB pg 62 > Selfishness - **self-centeredness!** That, we think, is the root of our troubles. Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity, we step on the toes of our fellows and they retaliate. Sometimes they hurt us, seemingly without provocation, but we invariably find that at some time in the past we have made decisions based on self which later placed us in a position to be hurt.

This is the how and the why of it. First of all, we had to quit playing God. It didn't work. Next, we decided that hereafter in this drama of life, **God was going to be our Director. He is the Principal; we are His agents. He is the Father, and we are His children.**

Most good ideas are simple, and **this concept was the keystone of the new and triumphant arch through which we passed to freedom.**

BB pg xxvi > **[Obsession]**

They are restless, irritable and discontented, full of selfishness, resentments and fear unless they can again experience the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks -

BB pg xxvii > **[Psychic change]**

On the other hand - and strange as this may seem to those who do not understand - once a **psychic change** has occurred, the very same person who seemed doomed, who had so many problems he despaired of ever solving them, **suddenly finds himself easily able to control his desire for alcohol**, the only effort necessary being that **required to follow a few simple rules.**

One of the greatest mistakes people make is trying to improve without God's help.

SELF-WILL CANNOT OVERCOME SELF-WILL

God made self-will and free-will.

Easier softer way -- Let God do it.

We live in a God directed world!

Quit playing God!

God is our director (not suggestor)

BB pg 62 > **He is the Father we are His children**

All Gods commandments, principles, precepts are for OUR protection and/or provision.

Principle: Fundamental law, doctrine or assumption.

BB pg 58 > Half measures availed us nothing. We asked his protection and care (provision) with complete abandon.

Mark 7:20-23 > resentments

??? 1 John 1:5-7

12x12 Step four > Basic Instincts

Selfishness - Self-centeredness

God gave us self-will and free-will

God put us out of the Garden for using self-will
(out of fellowship) (lost eternal life)

If you get tired of using self-will

You can give it back to God.

You MUST be willing to have Him clean it up first!

ANY **Lamentations 3:40**

Will- thoughts

The process of forgiveness starts here.

ANY **Gal 5:19-21**

Didn't know how many I had until I set them on paper.

Self-centeredness is driven by a hundred forms of fear.

Self-reliance has failed us.

Perhaps there is a better way ---

We trust infinite God rather
than our finite selves.

We MUST replace fear with faith.

KJV 1 John 4:18 -fear

Fear prayer --

God, please remove my fear and direct my attention to what you would have me be.

In Jesus name - Amen

col 4 - selfish, dishonest, inconsiderate

col 1 - Whom had we hurt?

col 2 - jealousy, suspicion, bitterness

col 3 - where were we at fault

"We got this all down on paper"

Col 4 - Was it selfish or not?

Sex Prayer

God, please mold my ideals for a sane and sound sex life and help me live up to them. Whatever your ideal is help me be willing to grow toward it. Help me be willing to make amends where I have done harm. I want you to show me what I should do about each specific matter.

ANY **John 8:32** >

Know the truth and the truth will set you free.

WHOM THE SON SETS FREE IS FREE INDEED.

STEP 1 POWERLESSNESS

We admitted we were powerless over _____

that our lives had become unmanageable.

Powerless: In step one we discover that recovery begins with an admission that we are powerless. We admit that we do not have the power to live life the way God intends.

Unmanageable: We have tried to manage our lives and the lives of others. However, our management has always met with failure. In step one we admit that we cannot control or manage our lives any longer.

We shouldn't look for anything complicated or deep in step one. Instead we surrender and face our pain head on. We may have spent a lifetime avoiding, hiding, or medicating the pain.

Dr Bob pg 194 pr 2>

She naturally Sister Ignatia said.

Dr Bob pg 195 pr 4>

"He screened most of the applicants himself in the early days, either before or after they were admitted. After making rounds in the morning, he would sometimes say to me 'sister, that monkey up there doesn't want to make the program.' I would then give him a pathetic tale about the man's wife and little family and how the job was in jeopardy if he didn't straighten out. Doctor would shake his head and say, 'Sister, he just isn't ready.' Doctor was always right.

"I learned from experience that it was a waste of time to force anyone to accept the program," said Sister Ignatia ...

BB pg xxvi pr 4> [Obsession]

Men and women drink essentially because they like the effect produced by alcohol. The sensation is so elusive that, while they admit it is injurious, they cannot after a time differentiate the true from the false. To them, **their alcoholic life seems the only normal one. They are restless, irritable and discontented, unless they can again experience the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks** - drinks which they see others taking with impunity. **After they have succumbed** to the desire again, as so many do, and **the phenomenon of craving develops**, they pass through the well known stages of a spree, emerging remorseful, with a firm resolution not to drink again. This is repeated over and over, and **unless this person can experience an entire psychic change there is very little hope of his recovery.**

BB pg xxvii pr 2>

On the other hand - and strange as this may seem to those who do not understand - once a **psychic change** has occurred, the very same person who seemed doomed, who had so many problems he despaired of ever solving them, **suddenly finds himself easily able to control his desire for alcohol**, the only effort necessary being that **required to follow a few simple rules.**

{Further down the page}

"One feels that something more than human power is needed to produce the essential psychic change."

PIO pg 102 >

When Bill arrived, Dr. Silkworth had already formulated his theory of an "allergy." Later, in a 1937 article in the *Medical Record*, "Alcoholism as a Manifestation of Allergy," he likened the alcoholic's allergic state to the **plight of the hay fever patient who gradually becomes sensitized to certain types of pollen.**

PIO pg 102 >

It was Dr. Silkworth's theory -- unique at the time -- that alcoholism was the combination of this mysterious physical "allergy" and the compulsion to drink; that **alcoholism could no more be "defeated" by willpower than could tuberculosis.** Bill's relief was immense.

Allergy is an abnormal sensitivity to a specific substance (such as food, pollen, dust, etc.) or condition (as heat or cold) which in like amounts is harmless to most people.

Hay fever patient sensitized to certain types of pollen

Allergy to milk get case of diareha.

Allergic to strawberries break out in a rash.

I like clear spring water.....

? **BB pg 82 > The alcoholic is like a tornado** roaring his way through the lives of others. Hearts are broken. Sweet relationships are dead. Affections have been uprooted. Selfish and inconsiderate habits have kept the home in turmoil. **We feel a man is unthinking when he says that sobriety is enough.** He is like the farmer who came up out of his cyclone cellar to find his home ruined. To his wife, he remarked, "Don't see anything the matter here, Ma. Ain't it grand the wind stopped blowin'?"

—— This is one reason to study the Big Book ——

PIO pg 90 par4 >

Bill in summer of '32 ... He began to show signs of mental impairment. When people tried to reason with him during a drinking bout, he would turn violent and talk gibberish that frightened them. He "began to understand what real hangovers were like and sometimes bordered on delirium." He would lie in bed and drink while Lois was at work.

"The demon was now moving into full possession," he said.

BB pg 8 > [Bill W.'s Step One]

No words can tell of the **loneliness and despair** I found in that **bitter morass of self pity**. Quicksand stretched around me in all directions. I had met my match. I had been overwhelmed. **Alcohol was my master.**

PIO pg 82 & 83>

Lois described the profundity of their dilemma in these words: "Bill

so drunk he fell inert

"I suppose the pattern of his tolerance to alcohol was like that of many alcoholics. At fist, liquor affected him quickly; later, he became able to drink more and more without showing it; but then, suddenly, his tolerance dramatically diminished. Even a little liquor made him intoxicated.

PIO pg 108 & 109 & 110>

... Lois asked, "Just what does this mean doctor?"

"The old man slowly replied, "it means that you will have to confine him, lock him up somewhere ... He can't go on this way another year

..... Bill was to have one last great battle with booze ... I thought of golf. I suggested to Lois that I might go over to Staten Island where there was a public course. ...I soon crossed on a ferry and found myself seated on the bus beside a man ... we noticed something that looked like a speakeasy.

.....But it was noontime

My friend looked at me aghast. 'My God, is it possible that you could take a drink after what you told me? You must be crazy?'

"And my only reply could be this: 'Yes, I am'.

BB 2nd & 3rd pg 22 pr 4>

We know that while the alcoholic keeps away from drink, as he may do for months or years, he reacts much like other men. We are equally positive that once he takes any alcohol whatever into his system, something happens, both in the bodily and mental sense, which makes it virtually impossible for him to stop. The experience of any alcoholic will abundantly confirm this.

These observations would be academic and pointless if our friend never took the first drink, thereby setting the terrible cycle in motion. **Therefore, the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than in his body.**

BB 2nd & 3rd pg XXVII>

The classification of alcoholics seems most difficult, and in much detail is outside the scope of this book. There are.....

(1)

..

(5) ... **entirely normal in every respect**

One symptom in common: they cannot start drinking without developing the phenomenon of craving.

BB 2nd & 3rd pg 24 pr 1> [Squigly writing, italics]

*The fact is that most alcoholics, for reasons yet obscure, have lost the power of **choice in drink**. Our so-called will power becomes practically nonexistent. We are unable, at certain times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago. We are without defense against the first drink.*

BB 2nd & 3rd pg 30 pr 1>

Most of us have been unwilling to admit we were **real alcoholics**. No person likes to think he is bodily and mentally different from his fellows.

.....

BB 2nd & 3rd pg 20 pr 5>

Moderate drinkers have little trouble in giving up liquor entirely if they have good reason for it. They can take it or leave it alone.

Then we have a **certain type of hard drinker**. He may have the habit badly enough to gradually impair him physically and mentally. It may cause him to die a few years before his time. If a sufficiently strong reason - ill health, falling in love, change of environment, or the warning of a doctor - becomes operative, this man can also stop or moderate, although he may find it difficult and troublesome and may even need medical attention.

But what about the real alcoholic? He may start off as a moderate drinker; he may or may not become a continuous hard drinker; but at some stage of his drinking career he begins to lose all control of his liquor consumption, once he starts to drink.

BB 2nd & 3rd pg 30 pr 2>

We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics. This is the **first step in recovery**. **The delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed**. We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking. We know that **no real alcoholic ever recovers control**.

Dr. Bob pg 135 pr 6>

Of the 110 members then in the program, 70 were in the Akron-Cleveland area, the report said, noting that "in many respects, their meetings have taken on the form of the meetings described **in the Gospels of the early Christians during the first century**."

Dr. Bob pg 102 pr3>

Hospitalization was another must in the early days. Dr. Bob himself was one of the few exceptions. Even prospects who were fairly well dried out when they asked for help were required to put themselves in private rooms at City Hospital for periods ranging from five to eight days. This approach was emphasized partly because Dr. Bob was a physician who was hospital oriented and believed alcoholism to be a disease. The advantage of having the alcoholic alone in a room as a captive audience also had something to do with it. These patients were **allowed only a Bible as reading material**. Generally, their only visitors were **recovered** alcoholics.

This was so much a part of the treatment that Warren C., who came to A.A. in Cleveland in July 1939, recalled that there was considerable debate about whether he should be admitted to the fellowship, since he had *not* been hospitalized.

So when an A.A. mentions now that they didn't rush the Steps or have all this hospitalization when he came into the program, he's talking about the old days -- not the *old* old days.

Romans - 7:18-20 - [Obsession of the mind.]>

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do what I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. **Romans - 7:18-20**

Psalms 40:12 [Unmanageability] >For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me. **Psalms 40:12**

Use NIV or Living instead

Proverbs 23: 29-35> [The Allergy]

Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, [when] it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. *They have stricken me, [shalt thou say, and] I was not sick; they have beaten me, [and] I felt [it] not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.* **Proverbs 23:29-35 NKG**

Proverbs 20:1>

Wine gives false courage; hard liquor leads to brawls; what fools men are to let it master them, making them reel drunkenly down the street. **Proverbs 20:1 TLV**

Three thousand years haven't changed the fact that alcohol and sex are still two of the most alluring and destructive addictions. They promise pleasure and escape from our troubles, but in the end they result in shame and embarrassment. The only real escape from our troubles, including alcohol and sexual sins, is Jesus Christ. When we turn our life over to him and turn our sins, addictions and dependencies, we are freed to pursue a godly lifestyle. The temptations will still be there, but now we have God working with us to help us resist them. He will help us persevere in our recovery program.

2 Timothy 1:7>

For the Holy Spirit, God's gift, does not want you to be afraid of people, but to be wise and strong, and to love them and enjoy being with them.

2 Timothy 1:7 Life Recovery

John 14:15-17> Jesus promises the Holy Spirit

If you love , obet me; and I will ask the Father and he will give you another comforter, and he will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit who leads into all truth. The world at large cannot receive him, for it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you do, for he lives with you now and someday shall be in you.

John 14:15-17 Life Recovery

Romans 8:9>

But you are not like that. You are controlled by your new nature if you have the Spirit of God living in you (And remember that if anyone doesn't have the Spirit of Christ living in him, he is not a Christian at all.)

Romans 8:9 Life Recovery

Additional scriptures:

- * Romans 7:18
- * Deuteronomy 30:19-20
- * Psalm 6:6-7
- * Proverbs 28:26 step (3)
- John 15:1-8 steps (10-11-12)
- * Mark 4:35-41
- Mark 10:51 step (7)
- * I Corinthians 8:2
- II Corinthians 12:9-10 step (12)

Are there any questions on material covered so far???

Would all how care to join me in a first step prayer:

God, I ask for your help with my recovery. Of myself I am powerless and my life is unmanageable. I need to learn and remember that I cannot manage my life or the lives of others. I need to let go. Please help me let go. In Jesus name, amen

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Chapter 2 -- There is a Solution

BB pg 17 p 1>

We, of Alcoholics Anonymous, know thousands of men and women who were once just as hopeless as Bill. **Nearly all have recovered.** They have solved the drink problem.

PIO pg 111 Ebby T, Shep, Cebra G., Rowland H.

PIO pg 116 "fishers of men"

1 Corinthians 5:20>

The Kingdom of God is not just talking; it is living by God's power.

I Corinthians 5:20 Life recovery

I Corinthians 1:19-20>

For God says, "I will destroy all human plans for salvation no matter how wise they seem to be, and ignore the best ideas of men, even the most brilliant of them."

So what about these wise men, these scholars, these brilliant debaters of this world's great affairs? God has made them all look foolish and shown their wisdom to be useless nonsense.

I Corinthians 1:19-20 Life Recovery

BB pg 47>

It has been repeatedly proven among us that **upon this simple cornerstone** a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built. *

? **Isaiah 28:16 Foundation Stone in Zion - Cornerstone**

? **Psalms 118:22,23 Stone rejected, now capstone.**

? **Matt. 21:42 Stone rejected, honored cornerstone.**

** **1 Cor. 3:11 No other foundation**

** **Eph. 2:20 Cornerstone of building is Jesus Christ**

** **1 Peter 2:6 Christ - precious Cornerstone**

** **1 Peter 2:7,8 Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. but to those who do not believe,**

"The stone the builders rejected

has become the honored cornerstone."

and,

"A stone that causes men to stumble

and a rock that makes them fall."

Columbus, Galileo, The Wright Brothers, Professor Langley's flying machine

BB pg 51 _____ faith, belief, action, results

BB pg 52 pr 2> The bedevilmnts:

We were having trouble with...

...we had to ask...but the God idea did.

BB pg 53 par2 >

When we became alcoholics... ...God either is, or He isn't. What was our choice to be.

BB pg 55 par2>

Actually we were **fooling ourselves**, for deep down in every **man, woman, and child**, is the fundamental idea of God. It may be obscured by calamity, by pomp, by worship of other things, but in some form or other it is there. For faith in a Power greater than ourselves, and miraculous demonstrations of that power in human lives, are facts as old as man himself.

Dr. Bob pg 128 >

But Bill did not get to see John D. Rockefeller Jr. who dispatched Frank Amos out to Akron to investigate what was going on.

Mr. Amos, who was soon to become one of A.A.'s first nonalcoholic trustees, did a thorough job of investigating

In his report to Mr. Rockefeller in February 1938, Mr. Amos said that he had checked up on Dr. Smith as follows:

..... two pages

STEP THREE

DECIDE TO USE THAT POWER

Made a decision to turn **OUR will and OUR lives over**
to the care of God *as WE UNDERSTOOD HIM.*

How did they ...The first one hundred understand God?

[[[Handout - Original How It Works]]

PIO pg 196>

While Bill received "nothing but the warmest support" from Akron, he got what he called "a real mauling" from the New York members. Possibly, the Akron members were strongly attuned to Bill's spiritual ideas, while the New York group contained members who were either agnostic or skeptical. another possible reason was Dr. Bob's enormous influence and stature; his support of the book virtually guaranteed that most of the Akron members would also support it.

After the third and fourth chapters --"More About Alcoholism" and We Agnostics" -- were completed **Bill came to a place that had been a barrier in his own mind** and had given him considerable worry. He had set down the actual program for the alcoholic to follow, **and he wanted to make it as powerful as possible.**

He had great fear that **the message might be misunderstood**

As Bill put it, **"There must not be a single loophole through which the rationalizing alcoholic could wiggle out."**

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Bill wrote the Twelve Steps, he said, while lying in bed at 182 Clinton Street with pencil in hand and pad of yellow scratch paper on his knee. He wrote them in bed, said Lois, not because he was really sick, but he wasn't feeling well, and if he could lie down, he did: "He got into bed, that being the best place to think."

PIO pg 198 ...he asked for guidance.

As he started to write, he asked for guidance. and he relaxed. The words began tumbling out with astonishing speed. He completed the first draft in about half an hour, then kept on writing until he felt he should stop and review what he had written. Numbering the new steps, he found that they added up to twelve -- a symbolic number; he thought of the Twelve Apostles, and soon became convinced that the Society should have twelve steps.

The very first draft of the Twelve Steps, as Bill wrote them that night, has been lost. This is an approximate reconstruction of the way he first set them down.

————> Read:

PIO pg 198,199 > Original How It Works

Bill's first three steps were culled from his reading of James, the teachings of Sam Shoemaker, and those of the Oxford Group. The first step had to do with calamity and disaster; the second was admission of defeat -- that one could not go on living on the strength of one's own resources; and the third was an appeal to a Higher Power for help.

... two late callers that evening.....

close friend Horace C. and with him a "newcomer, dry barely three months." the two men had some objections: to the frequent use of the word "God" and to asking on one's knees to have one's shortcomings removed.

local members.... heated discussion Jimmy B.

Ruth Hock

**BB pg 60 > Being convinced, ...
 what do we do?**

**Will - our mind (thinking apparatus)
Life - our actions (I am the sum total of all my actions)**

"All action is born in thought." - Charley and Joe

So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making. They arise out of ourselves, and the alcoholic is an extreme example of self-will run riot, though he usually doesn't think so. Above everything, we alcoholics **must be rid of this selfishness**. We **must**, or it kill us! God makes that possible.

Dr. Bob pg 97 >

There was hardly a night [during the three months of Bill's stay in the summer of 1935] that we didn't sit up until two or three o'clock, talking.

"We already had the basic ideas, though not in terse and tangible form. We got them ... as a result of our study of the Good Book.

"all this happened..... it was providentially arranged.

Dr. Bob pg 111 >

"We had much prayer together in those days and began quietly to read Scripture and discuss a practical approach to its application in our lives," he said.

Dr. Bob pg 101 >

On the other hand, we were taking them upstairs and getting them on their knees to surrender, which I felt was a very important part."

"The surrender was more than important; it was a must"

"There you can see the beginning of the Twelve Steps," he said, "We called that the surrender. They demanded it."

Dr. Bob pg 101 >

I often wonder how many people that come in now would survive an experience like that -- a regular old fashioned prayer meeting," said Dorothy, who was then married to an A.A. member, Clarence S., and later came into A.A. herself. (She died in 1971.) "The newcomers surrendered in the presence of all those other people." after the surrender, many of the steps -- involving inventory, admission of character defects, and making restitution --- were taken within a matter of days."

Dr. Bob pg 118 >

"I enjoyed those men coming to see me."

.....in the first draft of the twelve steps, people were to be on their knees when they surrendered. but the other drunks made Bill take it out."

Dr. Bob pg 143-144 >

Doc Smith came in... [Clarence]

....."Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

FIRST THINGS FIRST

HIW pg 65 Chapter 3.8 "The Meeting at T. Henry's"

"Guests at these House-parties are treated as guests; they meet on an equal social footing, whatever may be their social status elsewhere; gloom is conspicuous by its absence, and there is more laughter at an Oxford Group House-party than at many ordinary social gatherings."12 "Moved by the spirit of anonymity, we try to give up our natural desires for personal distinction as A.A. members both among fellow alcoholics and before the general public."13

"But why shouldn't we laugh? We have recovered and have been given the power to help others."

"Everybody knows that those in bad health, and those who seldom play, do not laugh much. So let each family play together of separately, as much as their circumstances warrant. We are sure God wants us to be happy, joyous, and free"14

Br. Bob pg 139 >

"After the meeting" T. Henry continued, we might take the new man upstairs....

.... During the prayer, he usually made a declaration of his willingness to turn his life over to God."

PIO pg 118 >

Calvary Mission at Second Avenue and East 23st Street.

PIO pg 117 >

"On the day ..."

"Just then Ebby turned up,

"There were hymns and prayers. Tex,

"Soon, I knelt among

"Afterward, I could

.... **I had done all right and had given my life to God."**

12 x 12 pg 98 >

Prayer and meditation are our principal means of conscious contact with God.

(last paragraph)

To certain newcomers and to those one-time agnostics who still cling to the A.A. group as their "higher Power," claims for the power of prayer may, despite all the logic and experience in proof of it, still be unconvincing or quite objectionable.

Of course we finally did experiment, and when unexpected results followed, we felt different; in fact we *knew* different; and so we were sold on meditation and prayer. And that, we have found, can happen to anybody who tries. It has been well said that "**almost the only scoffers at prayer** are those who never tried it enough."

Those of us who have come to make regular use of prayer would no more do without it than we would refuse air, food, or sunshine. And for the same reason. As the body can fail its purpose for lack of nourishment, so can **the soul**. We all need the light of God's reality, the nourishment of His strength, and the atmosphere of His grace. To an amazing extent **the facts of A.A. life confirm this ageless truth.**

Dr. Bob pg 131 He described **the "Program"** as follows"

"1. An alcoholic must realize that he is an alcoholic, incurable from a medical viewpoint, and that he must never again drink anything with alcohol in it.

"2. He must surrender himself absolutely to God, realizing that in himself there is no hope.

"3. Not only must he want to stop drinking permanently, he must remove from his life other sins such as hatred, adultery, and others which frequently accompany alcoholism. Unless he will do this absolutely, Smith and his associates refuse to work with him.

"4. He must have devotions every morning -- a 'quiet time' of prayer and some reading from the Bible and other religious literature. Unless this is faithfully followed, there is grave danger of backsliding.

"5. He must be willing to help other alcoholics get straightened out. This throws up a protective barrier and strengthens his own willpower and convictions.

"6. It is important, but not vital, that he meet frequently with other reformed alcoholics and form both a social and religious comradeship.

"7. Important, but not vital, that he attend some religious service at least once weekly."

.....

PIO pg 197

The original six steps

There is no evidence that the Oxford Groups had such a specific program; yet the Oxford Group ideas prevail in these original six steps as listed by Bill:

1. We admitted that we were licked, that we were powerless over alcohol.

2. We made a moral inventory of our defects or sins.

3. We confessed or shared our shortcomings with another person in confidence.

4. We made restitution to all those we had harmed by our drinking.

5. We tried to help other alcoholics, with no thought of reward in money or prestige.

6. We prayed to whatever God we thought there was for power to practice these precepts.

"Maybe our **six chunks of truth** should be broken up into smaller pieces," he said. "Thus we could better get the distant reader over the barrel, and at the same time we might be able to **broaden and deepen the spiritual implications of our whole presentation.**"

THE FOUR ABSOLUTES
ABSOLUTE UNSELFISHNESS
ABSOLUTE HONESTY
ABSOLUTE PURITY
ABSOLUTE LOVE

HIW pg 70>

Clarence said the early Oxford Group people were told to live by these Absolutes to the best of their ability. They were told to judge their actions and thoughts by first asking themselves four questions.

- 1) Is it true or false?
- 2) Is it right or wrong?
- 3) How will it affect the other fellow?
- 4) Is it ugly or beautiful?

These questions can also be found

..... next five paragraphs

..... he once again felt like a new man.

Are there any questions on Step 3???

How do we do the third step? ---

Please join me on your knees for a third step prayer.

Use: BB pg 63 OR Long Form Handout

OR Heavenly Father,
I turn my will and my life over to you. Mold me and do with me as you will. I trust you to guide my steps, as I enter the world with hope that I may better do your will. I ask for your forgiveness and acceptance. I welcome your Holy Spirit Power, love, and guidance in everything I do and say.
In Jesus name - Amen

2 Cor. 5:17 New Creation

- Step 1- willingness - foundation
- Step 2 - Believe - cornerstone
- Step 3 - Decision - keystone

Additional Scriptures:

Luke 22:42

Hebrews 11:6

Proverbs 3:5-6

Psalms 143:10-11 step (7)

John 1:12-13

Matthew 11:28-30

We have now completed step 3. Agree??

BB pg 216 > ...Cleveland Clarence and Bill W. ...wife Mary.

One evening I had gone out after dinner..... stayed a little later than usual. and when I came home Clarence was sitting on the davenport with Bill W. I do not recollect the specific conversation that went on but I believe I did challenge Bill to tell me something about A.A. and I do recall one other thing: I wanted to know what it was that worked so many wonders, and hanging over the mantel was a picture of Gethsemane and Bill pointed to it and said, "There it is," [Matthew 26:39]

KJV,NIV John 3:3, 3:16-18

Romans 10:9,10 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth you confess and are saved.

STEP FOUR WHAT MAKES ME TICK?

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

BB pg 63-64 >Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, which many of us had 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 to 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.

Therefore, we started upon a personal inventory. This was *Step Four*.

Blocking us from what?

BB pg 66 the sunlight of the spirit.

Dr. Bob pg 227 par 8 >

The widow of an oldtimer remembered Dr. Bob standing up at the meeting with "**the Good Book under his arm**" and recalled that he used to say **the answers were there** if you looked for them, because people back in the Old Testament were just like the people of this century and had the same problems.

And if he were here now, Dr. Bob might say the same thing about the early A.A.'s--that they were just like the members today and had the same problems.

Dr. Bob donated that Bible to the King School Group, where it still rests on the podium at each meeting. Inside is an inscription: "It is the hope of the King School Group--whose sobriety this is--that this Book may never cease to be a source of wisdom, gratitude, humility, and guidance, as when fulfilled in the life of the Master." It is signed "Dr. Bob Smith."

....."Dr. Bob was the first group leader I heard refer simply and without ostentation to God. He cited the Sermon on the Mount as containing the underlying spiritual philosophy of A.A."

There is a lot of confusion about step 4.

Many people have died because they did not get past Step four.

SEARCHING & FEARLESS

Fearless means without fear.

BB pg 61 last pr >

Our actor is self-centered—ego-centric, as people like to call it nowadays.

BB pg 62 > Selfishness - self-centeredness!.....

...we must or it kills us. God makes that possible.

BB PG 64 >

OUR DECISION COULD HAVE LITTLE PERMANENT EFFECT UNLESS AT ONCE FOLLOWED BY

Instructions for step 4 are so short we often overlook them.

BB pg 64 > **Resentment is the "number one offender"...**

In dealing with resentments we set them on paper.

RE - |again
SENTIMENT | feel feel again (from the Greek root)

Column1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
People	what they	how it	exact nature
Institutions	did to us	affected	of my wrongs
principles		me	

Searching (thorough)
Fearless (not fearful, without fear)
Moral (truthful)

It's really not the people we're upset with it's what they did to us.

you can only see one resentment at a time.

ANY resentment will get us drunk.
Blocks us from the sunlight of the spirit.

Get them ALL down on paper.

BB pg 66 > we turned back to the list,these resentments **MUST** be mastered.

This was our course:

column1	sick people
column2	their symptoms
column3	the way they disturbed us

Heavenly Father,

Help me show those who have wronged me the same tolerance, pity and patience that I would cheerfully grant a sick friend. This is a sick person. How can I be helpful? God, save me from being angry. Thy will be done.

In Jesus name - amen

BB pg 67 > **Column 4** ...referring to our list again...

Putting out of our minds, wrongs others had done (column1 & 2)
...our own mistakes (column 4)

Where had we been:
SELFISH, DISHONEST, SELF-SEEKING OR FRIGHTENED.

BB pg 66 >
It's plain...resentments and anger...

...shut ourselves off from the sunlight of The Spirit.

Col 4) SELFISH, DISHONEST, SELF-SEEKING OR FRIGHTENED.

inconsiderate
harmful conduct

BB pg 67 par3>

when we saw our faults (col 4)
we admitted our wrongs (col 3)
were willing(step 8 & 9)
to set these matters (col1 & 2)

Step 5 exact nature(col 4) of our wrongs (col 3)
Step 6 defects of character
step 7 shortcomings
Chap 6 obstacles in our path

nature - inherent characteristics
(real truth)

BB pg 67 >Notice that the word "fear" is bracketed alongside the difficulties with Mr. Brown, Mrs. Jones, the employer, and the wife. This short word somehow touches about every aspect of our lives. It was an evil and corroding thread; the fabric of our existence was shot through with it. It set in motion trains of circumstances which brought us misfortune we felt we didn't deserve. But did not we, ourselves, set the ball rolling?

BB pg 68 > **We reviewed our fears thoroughly**

We put them on paper

BB pg 68 par3 > We never apologize to anyone for depending upon our Creator. We can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. **All men of faith have courage.** They trust their God. **We never apologize for God.** Instead we let Him demonstrate, through us, what He can do. We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear.

BB pg 68 par4 > **Now about sex.**

BB pg 69 par1 > We reviewed our own conduct...

In this way we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life. We subjected each relation to this test - was it selfish or not? **We asked God to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them. We remembered always that our sex powers were God-given and therefore good, neither to be used lightly or selfishly nor to be despised and loathed.**

Whatever our ideal turns out to be, we must be willing to grow toward it. **We must be willing to make amends where we have done harm, provided that we do not bring about still more harm in so doing.** In other words, we treat sex as we would any other problem. In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come, if we want it. God alone can judge our sex situation.

BB pg 70 par 1 > **Suppose we fall short...**

par 2 > **To sum up about sex**

analyzed - (get down to the truth of it)

BB pg 70 par 3 > Harmful conduct other than sex.

We have listed the people...are willing(step 8)...if we can.

...faith did for us what we could not do for ourselves.

**Convinced now that God can (step 2)
already made a decision (step 3)
and an inventory (step 4)
of our grosser handicaps (three part inventory)
(resentments,fears, harmful conduct)**

...truth about yourself.

Dr. Bob pg 54,55> At the core of the program were the "four absolutes": absolute honesty, absolute unselfishness, absolute purity, and absolute love.

.....

In addition to the four absolutes, the Oxford Groupers had the "five C's" and the "five procedures." the C's were confidence, confession, conviction, conversion, and continuance, while the procedures were: Give in to God; listen to God's direction; check guidance; restitution; and sharing -- for witness and for confession."

Additional Scriptures:

Psalms 139:23-24

Lamentations 3:19-22

* Lamentations 3:40

Jeremiah 17:9-10

Mark 14:66-72

II Corinthians 13:5-6 test

* Ephesians 4:31

Colossians 3:5-8

James 1:12,19-21

I John 4:18 fear

Are there any questions on Step four??

Can we agree that we understand how to do step four and are ready to do it.

You have made a good beginning.

Would everyone who has not done a Big Book Fourth Step please
Have it done by _____ ex: this time next week?

9-28-96 pln (rev. 97-2-25 pln)[rev.97-04-09 pln]
[rev.97-05-11 pln] [rev.98-01-27 Pub. pln] [rev. 2002-05-02 pln]

BB pg 63 par 1 >

As we felt new **power** flow in, as we enjoyed **peace** of mind, as we discovered we could face **life** successfully, as we became conscious of **His presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. We were reborn.**

Dictionary re-birth 1. A new or second birth 2. A reawakening; revival

Reference: John 3:1, II Cor. 5:?, II Cor. 3:14-17 (step 10)