

Fourth Step Summary Guide

“Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves”

Directions for step four are on pages 64-71:

This step is to be done without fear as it is simply a “fact-finding and fact-facing” process. It is a moral inventory, moral defined as the difference of right from wrong and true from false.

When do we do step 4?

Pg64- “Though our decision was a vital (necessary for life) and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face (step 4 & 5), and to be rid of (step 6 and 7), the things in ourselves that had been blocking us.”

There is a time reference for how long after step 3 that we begin step 4, it says “at once”.

What has been blocking us? Selfishness, the root problem. “Being convinced that self, manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us, we considered its common manifestations.” “We had to get down to causes and conditions.”

Blocking us from what? God, the only one that can relieve our alcoholism.

We are going to be doing a four part inventory:

1- Resentments

Pg 64- “Resentment is the number one offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else.”

Pg 66- “It is plain that any life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness.”

Pg 66- “But 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.”

Pg 66- “We began to see that the world and its people really dominated us. In that state, the wrong-doing of others, fancied or real, had the power to actually kill.”

Pg 66- “If we were to live, we had to be free of anger.”

Lastly, they give us directions to avoid resentments from continuing right now:

Pg 66&67- We realize the people who wrong us are perhaps sick as well. All people have selfishness in them, not just alcoholics. This is what we do:

“We asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend. When a person offended, we said to ourselves, “this is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him. God save me from being angry. Thy will be done.”

“We avoid retaliation and argument; we wouldn’t treat sick people that way.”

Pg 68- “Just to the extent that we do as we think He would have us, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable us to match calamity with serenity.”

That is how we go from turning anger into resentment, to matching calamity with serenity.

2- Fears

Pg 67- “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.”

“self reliance failed us. Some of us had great self-confidence but it didn’t solve the fear problem, or any other.”

“For we are now on a different basis, the basis of trusting and relying on God. We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves. We are in the world to play the role He assigns.”

Fear is a manifestation of self, and we already know we do not have the power to remove it. So how do we get rid of fear?

Pg 68- “We ask Him (pray) to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear.”

3- Sex

Pg 69- "We all have sex problems. We would hardly be human if we didn't."

"We subjected each relation to this test- was it selfish or not." – If it was selfish, it needs to go on the list. Very simple.

"In meditation, we ask God (pray) what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come, if we want it."

How do we move forward with our sex lives?

Pg 69- We asked God (pray) to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them."

"whatever our ideals turn out to be, we must be willing to grow towards it."

Pg 70- If sex is very troublesome, we throw ourselves the harder into working with others. We think of their needs and work for them."

4- Harms

We list any additional harms we have done to others that were not on our resentment, fear or sex list.

How to fill out the columns (1 of 2)

Resentments-

Column 1

Write the person, institution or principles that you are angry at.

Column 2

Write what they did to make us angry. Make it a short sentence. The inventory is not meant to be read. It is meant to be discussed later. These are simply notes to remind you of what happened, you do not need to write down all the details. When you read the notes, you can then discuss all the details one on one when you do step five.

Column 3

When they harmed us, what did it affect?

Our self-esteem, financial security, ambitions, personal relationships, sex relationships or pride

Column 4

What did I do, if anything to have "set the ball rolling" or in retaliation?

Column 5

What character defect was used in my action for my part?

Fear-

Fears can be tricky as many of us at first glance do not think we are afraid of much. This "suggestion" is not in the textbook, but many have found it useful in identifying fears. If you have a similar problem when doing this inventory, you may wish to try it.

Look for fear in either of these three categories:

- 1- Afraid of something I am going to lose
- 2- Afraid of something I am not going to get
- 3- Afraid of what is going to happen when they find out what I did

Column 1

Write the person, institution or principles that you are fearful about.

Column 2

Write why you are afraid. Again, Make it a short sentence. The inventory will be discussed in detail, not read.

Column 3

What does this fear effect?

Self-esteem, financial security, ambitions, personal relationships, sex relationships or pride

Column 4

What did I do, if anything to have "set the ball rolling" or in retaliation?

Column 5

What character defect was used in my action for my part?

Sex-

Column 1- Write the person whom you had harmed

Column 2- What did you do?

Column 3- What part of self was threatened?

Self-esteem, financial security, ambitions, personal relationships, sex relationships or pride

Column 4- Why did you do it?

Column 5 - What character defect was used in my action for my part?