AA 12-Step Packet

Big Book sponsorship — from the first meeting through Step Twelve

WHEN YOU FIRST MEET YOUR PROSPECT

Working With Others

1. Get an idea of his behavior, his problems, his background, the seriousness of his condition, and his religious leanings. (BB p. 90)
2. Share experience and earn his trust. (BB p. 91)
3. Are you satisfied that he is a real alcoholic? (BB p. 92)
4. Talk about the hopelessness of alcoholism and offer a solution. Stress the spiritual feature freely; outline the program of action. (BB pp. 92–94)
5. **Ask him if he wants to quit for good and for all and if he would go to any extreme to do so.** (BB p. 90)
6. **Show him the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.**
7. Have him turn to the Foreword to the First Edition, read him the first three sentences, and highlight the lines below.

HOW THE PACKET RUNS

- **Six assignments, five meetings.** He goes home with an assignment after every meeting and calls when it is done.
- **He highlights the Book** — every passage below gets marked in his own copy.
- **He writes everything down** — visualizations, lists, inventories. Nothing lives in his head.

ASSIGNMENT #1

- ☐ In the Big Book, read from **page xi to page 43** — the Preface, the Forewords, the Doctor's Opinion, Bill's Story, There Is a Solution and More About Alcoholism — with a pen, marking every line that is you. Find the **four (4) things that will NOT keep you sober**.
- ☐ Give Visualizations I (1–14). **Vocalize four times daily.** (Have your sponsee write down everything you give him.)
- ☐ Make a list of everything alcohol and drugs has cost you.

"To show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the main purpose of this book. For them, we hope these pages will prove so convincing that no further authentication will be necessary."

— BB p. xiii ¶1, Foreword to First Edition

VISUALIZATIONS I

read aloud four times a day

1. I see myself going to seven meetings a week.
2. Going to meetings is fun and interesting.
3. I look forward to each meeting.
4. Meeting and talking to people is fun.
5. I stay and talk to two people after each meeting. I talk about the fact that I have a sponsor and we are going to be doing the steps together.
6. I see myself focusing on the needs of others, rather than myself.
7. I see myself establishing a relationship with the God of my understanding.
8. I read the Big Book every day.
9. I fulfill all assignments my sponsor gives me, with eager anticipation for the next assignment.
10. I am eager to forgive people for the wrongs they have done to me.
11. I recognize that the growth and maintenance of the spiritual experience is my only hope for recovery.
12. I love everyone in the fellowship even though sometimes I may not agree with what they say or do.
13. I see myself sober, happy, and fulfilled.
14. I am willing to go to any length for sobriety.

Meeting #1

Steps One, Two and Three — discuss, and have the new man highlight each passage in his Big Book. The problem first: this page, then the mental obsession and the cycle.

Four things that will not keep you sober

SELF-KNOWLEDGE — p. 39

> *"But the actual or potential alcoholic, with hardly an exception, will be absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge."* — BB p. 39 ¶1

WILL POWER — p. 24

> *"Our so-called will power becomes practically non-existent."* — BB p. 24 ¶1

A LONG PERIOD OF SOBRIETY — p. 32

> *"Then he fell victim to a belief which practically every alcoholic has—that his long period of sobriety and self-discipline had qualified him to drink as other men."* — BB p. 32 ¶2

OTHER PEOPLE — p. 24 (the packet cites pp. 24 & 43)

> *"When this sort of thinking is fully established in an individual with alcoholic tendencies, he has probably placed himself beyond human aid, and unless locked up, may die or go permanently insane."* — BB p. 24 ¶4

WHAT IS A REAL ALCOHOLIC? — definition

> *"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 p. 21 ¶1

- ☐ *Is that you?* — yes / no

ALCOHOLISM AFFECTS THE BODY — the 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."* — BB p. xxviii ¶1

> *"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."* — BB pp. 22–23 ¶4

ALCOHOLISM AFFECTS THE MIND — the obsession

> *"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 non-existent. 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 p. 24 ¶1

> *"If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic."* — BB p. 44 ¶1

- ☐ *When you honestly want to, can you quit entirely?* — yes / no
- ☐ *When drinking or using, do you have control over the amount?* — yes / no

→ **Go over the next three pages with him: The Mental Obsession, then the Cycle of Addiction.** ← This is the ground the packet's Power of Choice diagram covered — the pros and cons the alcoholic can list in full and still drink past. The four sentences and the cycle show *why* the list is not the defense. Then **Insanity** — the same p. 24 passage, read again: *"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."*

The Mental Obsession

the four ways the thought gets in, in the Big Book's own words — Step One in brevity

STEP ONE — WHAT IT MEANS

The Doctor's Opinion, pp. xxviii–xxix

Powerless — because of the allergy: once we start, the craving decides the amount. **Unmanageable** — because of the mind that cannot remember it has the allergy. All it can remember is *"the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks"* (BB pp. xxviii–xxix ¶4). Powerless over the body and powerless over the mind where alcohol is concerned. Nothing human fixes that — which is exactly why the doctor says what he says next:

> *"…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."* — BB p. xxix ¶1

> *"This is the baffling feature of alcoholism as we know it—this utter inability to leave it alone, no matter how great the necessity or the wish."*
>
> — BB p. 34 ¶2 · and the chapter's promise, p. 35: *"So we shall describe some of the mental states that precede a relapse into drinking, for obviously this is the crux of the problem."*

THE OBSESSION IS AN IDEA

not a preoccupation

> *"The idea that somehow, someday he will control and enjoy his drinking is the great obsession of every abnormal drinker. The persistence of this illusion is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of insanity or death."* — BB p. 30 ¶1

Most men think "obsession" means thinking about it all day. The Book means one *idea* — that somehow, someday, it will work. Jim and Fred were not thinking about drinking when they drank.

WITHOUT DEFENSE

the hot stove

> *"The almost certain consequences that follow taking even a glass of beer do not crowd into the mind to deter us. If these thoughts occur, they are hazy and readily supplanted with the old threadbare idea that this time we shall handle ourselves like other people. There is a complete failure of the kind of defense that keeps one from putting his hand on a hot stove."* — BB p. 24 ¶2

☐ *The last time you picked up, was last time's wreckage in the room with you?* yes / no

THE SENTENCES THE HEAD SAYS

three of the four are in one paragraph

> *"The alcoholic may say to himself in the most casual way, "It won't burn me this time, so here's how!" Or perhaps he doesn't think at all. How often have some of us begun to drink in this nonchalant way, and after the third or fourth, pounded on the bar and said to ourselves, "For God's sake, how did I ever get started again?" Only to have that thought supplanted by "Well, I'll stop with the sixth drink." Or "What's the use anyhow?""* — BB p. 24 ¶3

	THE SENTENCE	THE BOOK SAYS IT AS	THE BOOK'S MAN	PAGES
1	This time it'll be different	*"It won't burn me this time, so here's how!"*	Jim, whiskey in the milk	35–37
2	This time it'll be worth it	*"...qualified him to drink as other men"*	the man of thirty	32–33
3	F*** it	*"What's the use anyhow?"*	the deliberate drink	37
4	No thought at all	*"That was all. Nothing more."*	Fred, the mental blank spot	39–43

☐ *Which of the four has your voice? Say it out loud.* 1 / 2 / 3 / 4

The Mental Obsession, continued

a man for each — the Book met you before you got here

1 · "THIS TIME IT'LL BE DIFFERENT"

Jim, whiskey in the milk · pp. 35–37

THE HEAD SAYS *It won't hurt me this time. I'll be careful. I've got a system.*

> *"Suddenly the thought crossed my mind that if I were to put an ounce of whiskey in my milk it couldn't hurt me on a full stomach. I ordered a whiskey and poured it into the milk. I vaguely sensed I was not being any too smart, but felt reassured as I was taking the whiskey on a full stomach."* — Jim, BB p. 36 ¶2

> *"…parallel with our sound reasoning there inevitably ran some insanely trivial excuse for taking the first drink. Our sound reasoning failed to hold us in check. The insane idea won out."* — BB p. 37 ¶2

THE TELL a system — beer only, weekends only, "it's prescribed," milk. Jim had a system. The system was milk. Every system is already on the list at p. 31.

2 · "THIS TIME IT'LL BE WORTH IT"

the man of thirty · pp. 32–33

THE HEAD SAYS *I've earned it. I've been good long enough. I can handle it now.*

> *"Then he fell victim to a belief which practically every alcoholic has—that his long period of sobriety and self-discipline had qualified him to drink as other men. Out came his carpet slippers and a bottle. In two months he was in a hospital, puzzled and humiliated."* — BB p. 32 ¶2

> *"If we are planning to stop drinking, there must be no reservation of any kind, nor any lurking notion that someday we will be immune to alcohol."* — BB p. 33 ¶1

THE TELL time as a credential — thirty days, ninety, twenty-five years — and a lurking "someday, when..." you haven't said out loud.

3 · "F*** IT"

the deliberate drink · p. 37

THE HEAD SAYS *What's the use anyhow?*

> *"In some circumstances we have gone out deliberately to get drunk, feeling ourselves justified by nervousness, anger, worry, depression, jealousy or the like. But even in this type of beginning we are obliged to admit that our justification for a spree was insanely insufficient in the light of what always happened."* — BB p. 37 ¶3

THE TELL a feeling offered as the reason. The Book doesn't argue with the feeling. It puts the reason next to what happened and asks whether it covers it.

4 · NO THOUGHT AT ALL

Fred, the mental blank spot · pp. 39–43

THE HEAD SAYS *(nothing)*

> *"As I crossed the threshold of the dining room, the thought came to mind that it would be nice to have a couple of cocktails with dinner. That was all. Nothing more."* — Fred, BB p. 41 ¶1

> *"Not only had I been off guard, I had made no fight whatever against the first drink. This time I had not thought of the consequences at all."* — Fred, BB p. 41 ¶2

THE TELL a perfect day and no story. No villain, no bad day — the scariest one in the Book, and they saved it for last.

> *"Once more: The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink. Except in a few rare cases, neither he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. His defense must come from a Higher Power."*
>
> — BB p. 43 ¶3

NOTHING HUMAN STOPS IT

the four things, and where the defense comes from

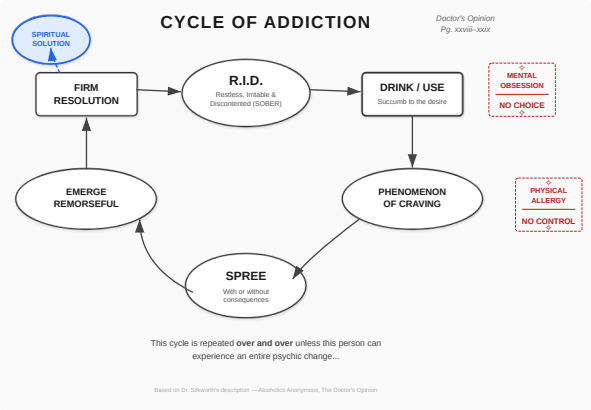
- **What you know.** Fred: *"Self-knowledge would fix it."* (BB pp. 39–40 ¶2) · **How hard you try.** Fred again: *"it would be only a matter of exercising my will power and keeping on guard."* (BB p. 40 ¶2) · **How long it's been.** Twenty-five years. · **Who's watching.** Jim: *"On each of these occasions we worked with him, reviewing carefully what had happened."* (BB p. 35 ¶3)
- Where it comes from — Fred's turn: *"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."* (BB p. 42 ¶2) Not knowledge. A decision to go through with it.

☐ *Write the sentence your head says — the milk, the "someday, when," the f*** it, or the nothing — in your own words, and hand it to your sponsor.* done / not yet

☐ *Do the count: first consequence — what year? Last use — what date? How many times in between? (the number)* yes / no

Cycle of Addiction

The Doctor's Opinion, pp. xxviii–xxix — one paragraph, drawn as a circle



R.I.D. — restless, irritable and discontented (sober) → drink / use (succumb to the desire: the mental obsession, no choice) → the phenomenon of craving (the physical allergy, no control) → a spree, with or without consequences → emerge remorseful → a firm resolution → back to R.I.D. — unless the spiritual solution. Repeated over and over, unless this person can experience an entire psychic change.

> *"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 pp. xxviii–xxix ¶4

MY CYCLE

write it as it is for you

What does it look like when I'm R.I.D.? Dry-drunk — just not drinking or using? *(the bedevilments, p. 52)* What does your spiritual malady come out looking like? What are you like inside when sober?

What insane ideas do I have that give self permission to drink or use?

Can I always control the amount I drink or use?

What does a spree look like for me?

What does emerging remorseful feel like?

Have I made previous promises or firm resolutions to stay stopped? **And did I?**

The doctor's word for the way out is an entire *psychic change* (BB p. xxix ¶1) — the workshop's gloss: we repeat this cycle over and over until we are internally, emotionally rearranged, which is exactly what the Twelve Steps are designed to do.

What attempts have you made in the past to stay stopped?

Have you ever worked all Twelve Steps and sponsored others consistently?

Meeting #1, the Solution

the spirit, the spiritual malady, and what the Twelve Steps do

ALCOHOLISM AFFECTS THE SPIRIT

> *"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. 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 marshalled by the will, were not sufficient; they failed utterly."* — BB pp. 44–45 ¶4

> *"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?"* — BB p. 45 ¶1

> *"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."* — BB p. 45 ¶2

SYMPTOMS OF A SPIRITUAL MALADY

unmanageability

> *"We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were a prey to misery and depression, we couldn't make a living, we had a feeling of uselessness, we were full of fear, we were unhappy, we couldn't seem to be of real help to other people"* — BB p. 52 ¶2

- ☐ *Which of those are you, sober? (name them)* — yes / no

WHAT THE TWELVE STEPS DO

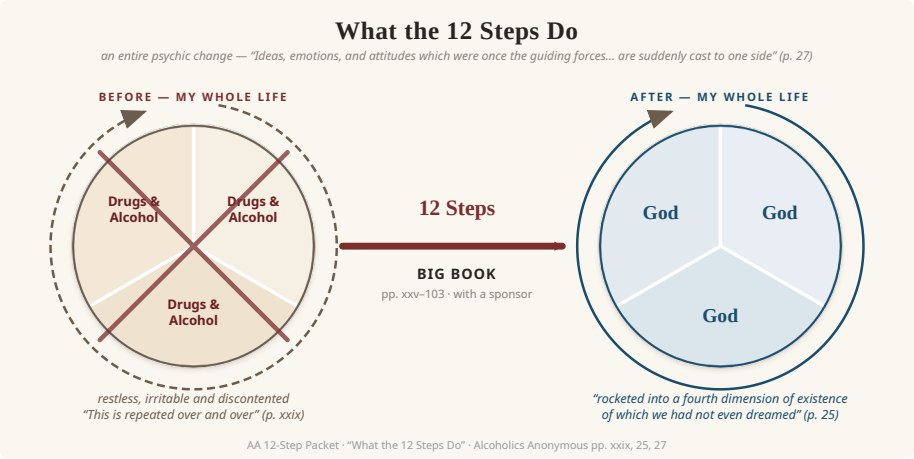
> *"We have found much of heaven and we have been rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence of which we had not even dreamed."* — BB p. 25 ¶1

> *"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."* — BB p. 25 ¶2

THE DOCTOR ON THE SAME CHANGE

p. 27

> *"Here and there, once in a while, alcoholics have had what are called vital spiritual experiences. To me these occurrences are phenomena. They appear to be in the nature of huge emotional displacements and rearrangements. Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them."* — BB p. 27 ¶4



What the 12 Steps Do. A circle divided in three, each third drugs and alcohol, struck through; an arrow marked 12 Steps / Big Book to a second circle, each third God. Everything drugs and alcohol occupied is replaced, not left empty (pp. 25, 27).

Steps Two and Three

the choice, the requirement — and the diagram of a life run on self-will

STEP TWO

> *"When we became alcoholics, crushed by a self-imposed crisis we could not postpone or evade, we had to fearlessly face the proposition that either God is everything or else He is nothing. God either is, or He isn't. What was our choice to be?"* — BB p. 53 ¶2

☐ *What is his choice to be?* everything / nothing

> *"(c) That God could and would if He were sought."* — BB p. 60 ¶6

☐ *Does he believe this?* yes / no

Read him the first two paragraphs of p. 25 — the spiritual experience.

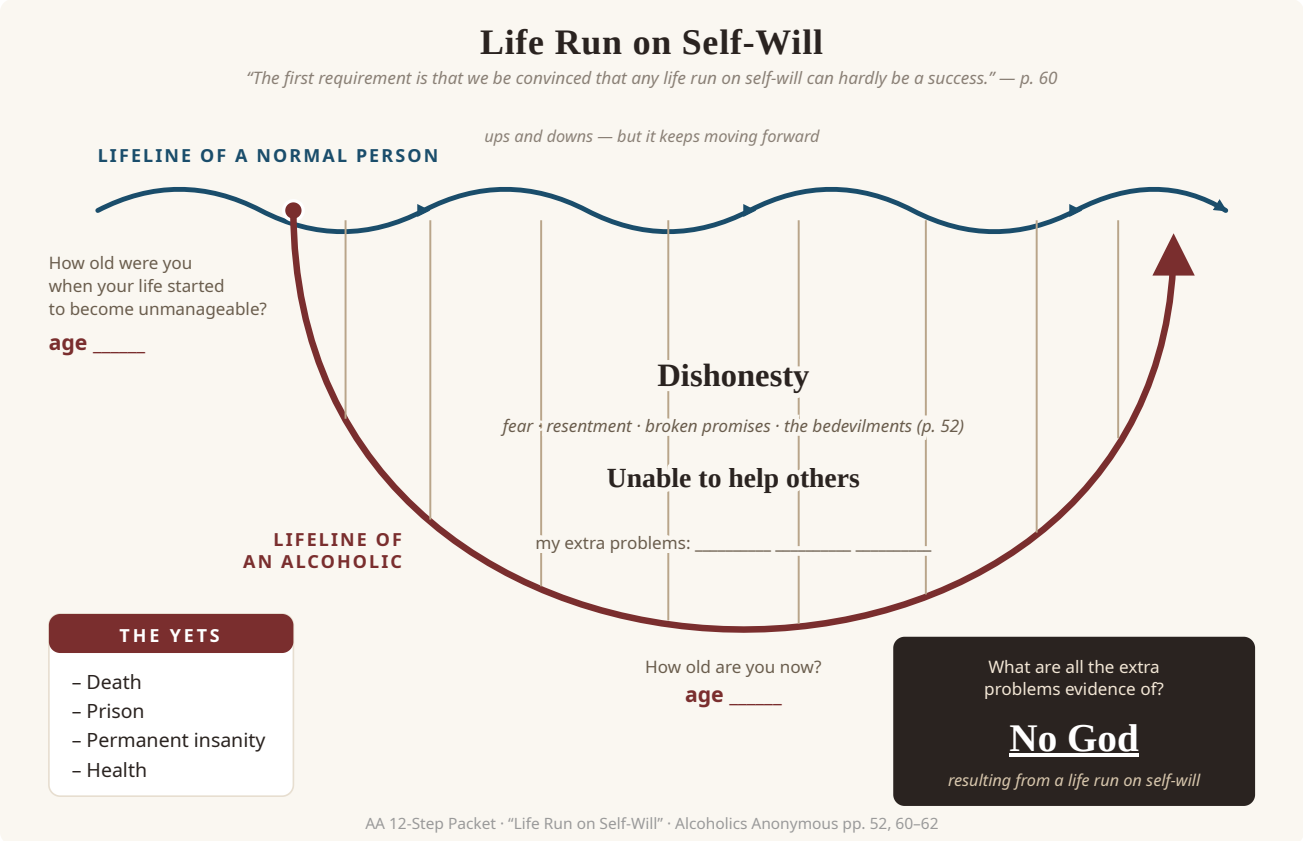
STEP THREE REQUIREMENTS

> *"The first requirement is that we be convinced that any life run on self-will can hardly be a success."* — BB p. 60 ¶8

→ Go over the **Life Run on Self-Will** diagram below. ←

> *"We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him."* — BB p. 63 ¶2

After your first meeting send him home to complete his second assignment.



Life Run on Self-Will. A normal life runs level with its ups and downs; the alcoholic's drops away into the bowl. How old were you when life started to become unmanageable? How old are you now? Fill the bowl with what piled up on the way down (dishonesty, unable to help others…); the yets wait at the bottom — death, prison, permanent insanity, health. What are all the extra problems evidence of? No God — resulting from a life run on self-will (p. 60).

Assignment #2 · Meeting #2

he goes home with the second assignment; then the abandonment list, dictated one line at a time

ASSIGNMENT #2

- ☐ Read the visualizations out loud (4× a day).
- ☐ Read pp. 60–63 and insert your name into the discussion (3× a day).
- ☐ Read pp. 25–29 and 55–57 (this describes the spiritual experience).
- ☐ Make a list of 3 things you might have trouble abandoning to God.
- ☐ Make a list of everyone you know in the fellowship.

MEETING #2

- Have a look at his list of people. **Tell him to keep adding to it.**
- Discuss pp. 60–63. Could he identify? **Is his life run on self-will?**
- Discuss the three things he said he might have trouble abandoning.
- Then **dictate the abandonment list on the next two pages, one line at a time.** Discuss whether or not he would give control of each to God. The pauses are the point, and **the line he argues with is the line to stop on.**

ASSIGNMENT #3

☐ Send him home to meditate on the list. **He will call you when he is ready to take the 3rd Step.**

The twelve items marked † are the packet's original list; the rest were added for the sheet. Dictate the twelve at least.

> *"Each person is like an actor who wants to run the whole show; is forever trying to arrange the lights, the ballet, the scenery and the rest of the players in his own way. If his arrangements would only stay put, if only people would do as he wished, the show would be great."*
>
> — BB pp. 60–61 ¶8

The Abandonment List

Step Three — would I give control of this to God?

This is not an inventory and it is not a promise. It is a **readiness check**. Go down the list one line at a time and mark each one honestly. The ones you cannot hand over yet are not failures — **they are the map of where self-will is still running the show**, and they are what Step Four is for.

☐ *"Would I give control of this to God?"* — yes, I'd hand it over / not yet

Mark **every** line. A blank line is an answer you haven't given yet — and "not yet" is an honest answer, so use it.

MYSELF

	YES	NOT YET
My perceived inadequacies. †	☐	☐
My strengths — and the credit I want for them.	☐	☐
My reputation. What I am known for.	☐	☐
What others think of me — and their judgment of me.	☐	☐
My health and my body.	☐	☐
My comfort.	☐	☐
My sex life. †	☐	☐

OTHER PEOPLE

	YES	NOT YET
That I know best — for myself *and for others*.	☐	☐
My judgment of others — the verdicts I pass.	☐	☐
The way I think about others. †	☐	☐
The way I treat other people. †	☐	☐
The way other people treat me.	☐	☐
Whether anybody changes.	☐	☐
Being right.	☐	☐
Being understood.	☐	☐

MY CIRCUMSTANCES

	YES	NOT YET
The way I spend my time. †	☐	☐
My finances. †	☐	☐
My job. †	☐	☐
My minute-by-minute, day-to-day living. †	☐	☐
The results of my best efforts.	☐	☐
The pace — how fast things happen.	☐	☐

BEHIND ME AND AHEAD OF ME

	YES	NOT YET
The bad things that have happened to me in the past. †	☐	☐
My future. †	☐	☐
The bad things that might happen to me. †	☐	☐
The people I love — and what happens to them.	☐	☐

MY RECOVERY

	YES	NOT YET
My service to others. †	☐	☐
How fast I get better.	☐	☐
Whether this works for me.	☐	☐
What people find out about me.	☐	☐
My anger — whether I am entitled to it.	☐	☐

The Abandonment List, continued

my own list — the things nobody had to tell you about

The printed list is somebody else's. **The ones that matter most are the ones you add** — a person, a plan, a grudge, a fear, a thing you will not talk about.

WHAT ELSE AM I HOLDING?

would I give control of this to God?

WHY THIS LIST EXISTS

> *"Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles."* — BB p. 62 ¶1

> *"Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us! God makes that possible."* — BB p. 62 ¶2

Not the drinking. The running of the show.

- Every item you did not check is a place you are still the director.
- **That is information, not a verdict.** Nobody checks them all.
- The Book does not ask you to feel ready — only **willing**.

WHERE THE "NOT YET" COLUMN GOES

straight into Step Four

- Look at every line you marked **not yet**.
- Ask one question of each: **what am I afraid would happen if I let go of this?**
- That answer is a fear, and fear goes in the third column of the inventory, bracketed beside the hurt.
- Most of them will turn out to be **the same two or three fears wearing different clothes**.

You do not have to resolve a single "not yet" before taking the Third Step. **You only have to be honest about which ones they are.**

For the sponsor. He takes the list home to meditate on and **calls you when he is ready for the Third Step** — Meeting #3.

Meeting #3 · Step Three

the decision, taken together — then the Fourth Step laid out

STEP THREE

> *"The first requirement is that we be convinced that any life run on self-will can hardly be a success."* — BB p. 60 ¶8

☐ *Is he convinced?* yes / no

> *"We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him."* — BB p. 63 ¶2

> "God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!"
>
> — BB p. 63 ¶2, How It Works

> *"We found it very desirable to take this spiritual step with an understanding person, such as our wife, best friend, or spiritual adviser. But it is better to meet God alone than with one who might misunderstand. The wording was, of course, quite optional so long as we expressed the idea, voicing it without reservation. This was only a beginning, though if honestly and humbly made, an effect, sometimes a very great one, was felt at once."* — BB p. 63 ¶3

> *"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."* — BB pp. 63–64 ¶4

ASSIGNMENT #4

Lay out the 4th Step as illustrated on the following six pages — the Big Book Awakening sheets, one resentment, one fear, one relationship to a sheet (show your man where the specific instructions are in the Big Book, pp. 64–71). **Have him commit to a date to do the 5th Step.**

☐ Set the 4th Step on paper: the resentment inventory, the fear inventory, the sex inventory, the sane and sound ideal.

> *"Resentment is the "number one" offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem 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."*
>
> — BB p. 64 ¶3, How It Works

Fourth Step · Resentment Inventory

Big Book Awakening, Step Four, p. 57 — one sheet per resentment · # ____

"God please help me see the truth about my resentments"

I am resentful at: _____ **The cause:** _____

Affects my: Keep Columns 1 & 2 in mind while writing the third column. *("we considered it carefully", p. 65)* Look at each sentence and consider its opposite, to let the inventory reveal your fears behind each of the seven areas of self — the Book brackets the word "fear" alongside the difficulties (p. 67). Write the fear in the margin: **fear of being...**

Self-esteem: How I see or feel about myself. "The role I've assigned myself." Start sentences with *"I am..."* — *Example: I am the best husband she could have.*

Pride: How I think others see me or feel about me. "The role I've assigned others." Start sentences with *"Others should..."* or *"No one should..."* or *"Others can..."*

Ambition: What I want to happen here. Start sentences with *"I want..."*

Security: What I need here, to be okay. Start sentences with *"I need... to be okay."*

Personal relations: My deep-seated beliefs of how this relationship is supposed to look. *("Wives trust their husbands" · "Mothers respect their sons' choices" · "Real friends always agree with me")*

Sex relations: My deep-seated beliefs of how real men and/or women are supposed to be. Start sentences with *"A real man..."* and/or *"A real woman..."*

Pocket book: Affects my finances. Start sentences with *"No one (can, should, shouldn't)..."* or *"Others (can, should, shouldn't)..."*

Fourth Step · The Realization and the Fourth Column

Big Book Awakening, Step Four, p. 61 — the turn from what they did to what I did

"God please help me see the truth."

The Realization: "How have I done the things I've resented in Column 2 to the person I've listed in Column 1 and/or others?" *(ref. p. 66: "this was our course: We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick... like ourselves")* Skip this if Column 1 is not a person.

> *"This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done."* — BB pp. 66–67 ¶4

FOURTH COLUMN

"Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened?" — p. 67

Entirely disregard the other person involved; this is **our** inventory, not theirs. *"Where were we to blame?"* (BB p. 67 ¶2) — before? during? after? What did I do? Look at the things you do to hold on to the resentment, and the things you do to protect yourself and how you look: *I shun, I gossip, I yell.* Stay focused on what you have seen so far, Column 1 through the Realization, as you write.

SELF-SEEKING: Look around the whole resentment; "What did I do? Where was I to blame?" *My selfish actions or activities were...?*

SELFISH: "What was my selfish thinking while I was doing the above actions?" *My selfish attitudes were...?*

DISHONEST: What were the lies I was telling myself that resulted in my selfish thinking above? *I was in the delusion that...?*

AFRAID: What are the fears that drive the delusions above? *I was afraid...?*

The fears drive the delusions that result in the attitudes that are behind the actions. *"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."* (BB p. 62 ¶1) Consider whether there are other fears that should be on the fear list. Consider the opposite of each fear; if it applies, add it: being alone / being committed? failing / succeeding? *"We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them."* (BB p. 68 ¶1)

HARM: "Do I see any harm I caused?" Look around the resentment as well — parents, friends, employers.

Fourth Step · Fear Inventory

read Big Book p. 67, "Notice that the word fear…" to p. 68, "…outgrow fear"

> *"We reviewed our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them. We asked ourselves why we had them. Wasn't it because self-reliance failed us? Self-reliance was good as far as it went, but it didn't go far enough. Some of us once had great self-confidence, but it didn't fully solve the fear problem, or any other. When it made us cocky, it was worse."* — BB p. 68 ¶1

STEPWORK NOTEBOOK

one set of four for every fear

Carry over all your fears from the resentment inventory (the fourth column) and add other fears, if applicable. Answer these four questions for **all** fears.

1. **What is the fear?**
2. **Why do I have this fear?** List the character defects that cause, or lead to, this fear.
3. **How has self-reliance failed me?** How do I set the ball rolling? What are the things I do to try not to feel this fear?
4. **What's a better way?** What would God have me do instead? Reliance on God?

EXAMPLE

fear of public speaking

1. **Fear of:** public speaking.
2. **Why** — I'm judgmental of others, so I fear others judge me. Hypocritical. Sounding stupid. Ego, pride, self-centered. Insecure. Anxiety.
3. **Self-reliance** — I stay quiet; I don't talk or share at meetings. I judge others' shares "bad" to feel better about myself.
4. **God** — would have me share my experience to try to help others. Find positive things to say about others. Get over myself. Trust and rely on God through the fear, in the action of sharing.

EXAMPLE

fear of being alone

1. **Fear of:** being alone.
2. **Why** — Insecure, lonely, feel unwanted, not being good enough, co-dependent, seek validation, lack healthy boundaries.
3. **Self-reliance** — I get into relationship after relationship to avoid being alone. I seek attention and compliments from everyone. Use people. Settle for less than I deserve. Avoid commitment. Keep walls up.
4. **God** — would have me seek Him and build a strong relationship with Him before I entertain a man or woman. Seek platonic friendships only. Be genuine. Have healthy, respectful boundaries. Find self-worth and validation through God's eyes and not people's eyes.

FEAR

continue in the stepwork notebook, one set per fear

1. Fear of: _____

2. Why: _____

3. Self-reliance: _____

4. Better way: _____

> "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 p. 68 ¶3

Fourth Step · Sex Inventory

"God please help me see the truth about my conduct in relationships" · Big Book Awakening, p. 69 — one sheet per relationship

> *"Now about sex. Many of us needed an overhauling there. But above all, we tried to be sensible on this question. It's so easy to get way off the track."* — BB p. 68 ¶4

Name: _____ **Relationship:** _____

WRITE A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RELATIONSHIP

My motives for getting involved were…

My specific conduct in the relationship has been…

The major points that came up in the relationship are…

How it ended… or how it is now…

Fourth Step · Sex Inventory, continued

the nine questions, ref. p. 69 — look at each relationship and answer them all

> *"We reviewed our own conduct over the years past. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate? Whom had we hurt? Did we unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness? Where were we at fault, what should we have done instead? We got this all down on paper and looked at it."* — BB p. 69 ¶1

Name: _____ **Relationship:** _____

1) Where had I been selfish?

2) Where had I been dishonest?

3) Where had I been inconsiderate?

4) Whom did I hurt? (Look around the relationship.)

5) Did I arouse jealousy?

6) Did I arouse suspicion?

7) Did I arouse bitterness?

8) Where was I at fault?

9) What should I have done instead? *(In the relationship. Don't write "not gotten involved in the first place." Be especially explicit with #9 — you will refer back to it for writing the sex ideal.)*

Harm: Write any specific harm that comes to you while writing.

Fourth Step · A Sane and Sound Sex Ideal

"In this way we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life." — p. 69

> *"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."* — BB p. 69 ¶2

THE 20-10-5

the written assignment

After completing the sex inventory, we move on to the sane and sound ideal. List your **top 20** characteristics that you hope to find in your forever, ideal mate or partner. Do not list things that are synonymous with each other (faithful and loyal are the same thing). List 20 *different* characteristics or traits that are most important to you. Then narrow the 20 to **10**, and the 10 to **5**. Look back at every #9 above — *what should I have done instead* — while you choose.

EXAMPLE

20

Forgiving	Honest	Hard working	Faithful	Reliable
Communication	Humorous	Kind / polite	Gentle heart	Tattoos
Thrifty	Optimistic	Confident	Fit / in shape	Spiritual
Patient	Loves dogs	Social / extrovert	Spontaneous	Sober / supportive of sobriety

10

Honest	Reliable	Humorous	Kind / polite	Thrifty
Confident	In shape	Spiritual	Loves dogs	Faithful

5

Honest	Reliable	Kind / polite	Spiritual	Faithful

MINE

20

10

5

> "To sum up about sex: We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the 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 work for them. This takes us out of ourselves. It quiets the imperious urge, when to yield would mean heartache."
>
> — BB p. 70 ¶2

Meetings #4 and #5

the Fifth Step and the quiet hour; then Steps Six and Seven, and Eight through Twelve laid out

MEETING #4

Listen to the Fifth Step. Then the quiet hour, alone with the Book — Assignment #5.

ASSIGNMENT #5

- ☐ Place special emphasis on the three inventories in the Fourth Step.
- ☐ Have him illustrate a sound and sane sex ideal.

"Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done. We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better. Taking this book down from our shelf we turn to the page which contains the twelve steps. Carefully reading the first five proposals we ask if we have omitted anything, for we are building an arch through which we shall walk a free man at last."

— BB p. 75 ¶3, Into Action

Meeting #5 — discuss any additional items, if any, on the Fourth Step

STEP SIX

p. 76

> *"We have emphasized willingness as being indispensable. Are we now ready to let God remove from us all the things which we have admitted are objectionable? Can He now take them all—every one? If we still cling to something we will not let go, we ask God to help us be willing."* — BB p. 76 ¶1

STEP SEVEN

p. 76

"When ready, we say something like this:"

> *"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."* — BB p. 76 ¶2 · "We have then completed Step Seven."

"Now we need more action, without which we find that "Faith without works is dead." Let's look at Steps Eight and Nine."

— BB p. 76 ¶3, Into Action · discuss the Amends List, last page

ASSIGNMENT #6

- ☐ Dictate Visualizations II (next page). **Vocalize 4 times daily.**
- ☐ **Steps 8 and 9.** Pp. 76–83. Have him highlight the clear-cut directions on the amends process.
- ☐ **Step 10.** Pp. 84–85. Emphasize that *"We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past."* (BB p. 84 ¶1) That means **work with others now!**
- ☐ **Step 11.** Pp. 85–88. Have your man commit to consistent morning and evening prayer and meditation following the clear-cut directions in the Big Book.
- ☐ **Step 12.** Pp. 89–103. Emphasize that *"Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail."* (BB p. 89 ¶1) Have him highlight the clear-cut directions when it comes to working with others. There are over 140 clear-cut instructions in chapter 7.

Visualizations II · Prayers

15–33, dictated at Meeting #5 — read aloud four times a day, with the two prayers

VISUALIZATIONS II

15. I have faith in God, I will not fear.
16. I am a believer all things are possible to me.
17. I walk by faith and not by sight, I allow God to move through my life by faith.
18. I determine to walk in love and forgive others.
19. The joy of God is in me.
20. I seek God and he hears me, He delivers me from all my fears.
21. God is with me, He will never fail me or forsake me.
22. I walk in Love, I do not insist on my own rights or my own way, for I am not self-seeking.
23. I am united with God, I am one spirit with Him.
24. I have faith in God and not my circumstances.
25. I have a realization of the power God has given to me to Love and help other alcoholics and addicts.
26. I forgive those whom I have anything against so that my prayers are not hindered.
27. I am filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.
28. Death and life are in the power of the tongue, I determine to only speak words of life.
29. I allow love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control to grow and develop in my life.
30. God's grace flows toward me; I always have all sufficiency in all things.
31. God is my rewarder as I diligently seek Him.
32. God has pleasure in my prosperity; I prosper in all areas of my life.
33. I have received the spiritual experience; therefore I have received power.

EVERY NIGHT AND EVERY MORNING

> "Dear God, thank you for giving me the spiritual experience as a result of honestly working the steps. Amen."

FOR TEN TO FIFTEEN PEOPLE FROM YOUR LIST, DAILY

> "Dear God, thank you for blessing _____. Thank you for giving him your divine guidance and wisdom. Thank you for bringing him to the _____ club, that I may help him of your love and way of life. Amen."

The prayers are the packet's own, not the Book's.

Amends List

"We have a list of all persons we have harmed and to whom we are willing to make amends. We made it when we took inventory." — p. 76

#	PERSON	NATURE OF THE AMEND	DATE I AM GOING TO MAKE THE AMEND
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			
17.			
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22.			
23.			
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25.			
26.			
27.			
28.			
29.			
30.			
31.			
32.			
33.			

> *"Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will and run the show ourselves. If we haven't the will to do this, we ask until it comes. Remember it was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol."* — BB p. 76 ¶3, Into Action

Transcribed from a Big Book sponsorship packet (18 pp.) · Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th ed. — page numbers are the Big Book's, wording verified against the text · set in where the packet's Power of Choice diagram and Fourth Step tables were: the mental-obsession readings, the Cycle of Addiction and the Big Book Awakening Step Four sheets from the Relevant Recovery Sponsorship Workshop (2024), and the Step Three abandonment list · the packet's own print variants and this edition's changes are listed in aa-12-step-packet.notes.md