Sponsorship Workshop 2024

Relevant Recovery — taking a sponsee from the first meeting through Step Twelve · transcribed from the workshop packet

New Prospect / Sponsee — 1st Meeting: Step 0 & 1

BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE

qualify — both directions

- Are you on any mind-altering substances or medicines?
- Are you willing to be **qualified**? (pp. 20, 21, 44) Some folks *do* get here by mistake — help them get to the **right** rooms!
- **Qualify as a chronic (real) alcoholic.** Help your prospect qualify himself or herself to you (we do not sponsor hard drinkers). Qualify yourself to the potential sponsee by explaining what alcoholism actually is and giving personal experiences around it.
  - Read the Doctor's Opinion / Cycle of Addiction, p. xxix
  - Pp. 20–24 (moderate and hard drinkers vs. real alcoholics) & p. 34
  - P. 44, the two qualifying questions
  - Give examples of the mental obsession (no defense against the first drink) and the physical allergy (phenomenon of craving — more, more, more)
  - Have you lost the power of **choice**? Have you lost **control**?
- Does the prospect believe he or she is a **real** alcoholic? (Hopeless variety.)
- The prospect has now qualified to the sponsor — if chronic, move on to what this relationship will look like.

ARE YOU WILLING TO…

Ask: Are you willing to go to **any lengths** for victory over alcohol and quit for good and for all? (Write it and sign it inside the cover of the Big Book.)

- Take the steps **quickly**. (Yes… it *is* a race.)
- Attend specific meetings early on. (Literature-based.)
- Focus on **just the Big Book** till the steps are done.
- Be completely **honest**! Now — not after the 5th step. (Sex, checks, meds.)
- Be open-minded about **anonymity**. (It's OK to tell folks you're in recovery.)
- Accept a **service commitment**… now! (Bottom of p. 129.)
- Stay accountable in all three parts of AA. (Circle and triangle.)
- Learn about the Traditions.
- Follow suggestions about meeting etiquette.
- Keep your appointments with me? (Let's respect each other's time.)
- Have assignments done on time. If the assignment is not done, we don't have a reason to meet — and if we don't meet, this delays your progress.
- **Sponsor others?** After the steps, you will consistently sponsor others.

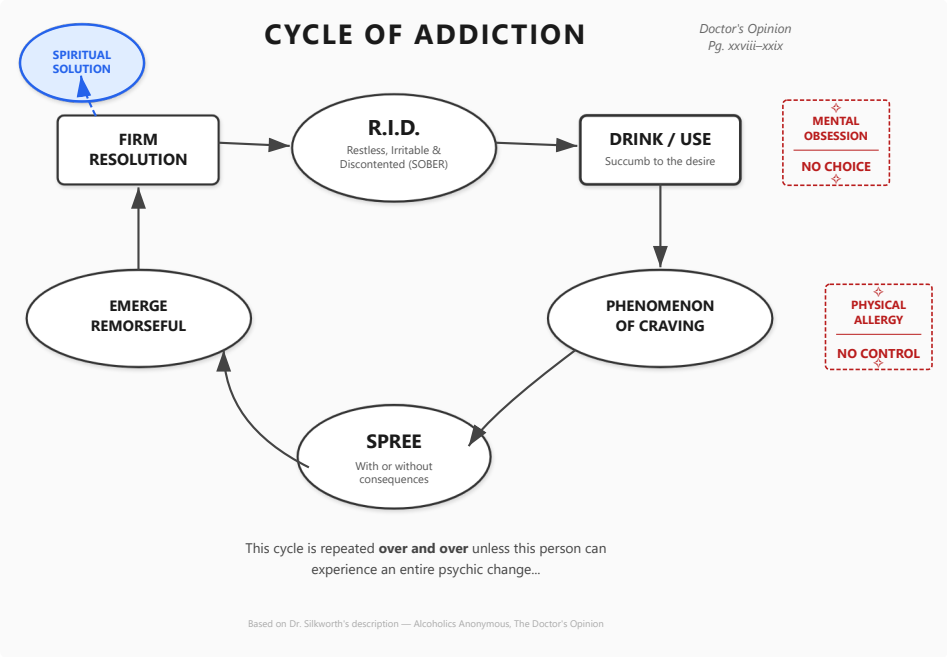
AA MEETING ETIQUETTE & TRADITIONS

- Arrive early and stay late.
- Take your Big Book to **every** meeting.
- Share **solution**. Meetings are not a dumping ground for your problems. It is *not* group therapy.
- No cellphone during the meeting.
- Get coffee and go to the bathroom **before** the meeting starts.
- Explain anonymity.
- Explain singleness of purpose. (No outside issues.)
- Explain what it means to be **recovered** — pp. iii, xiii, xv, xvii, xxv, 17, 20, 29, 45, 90, 96, 113, 132, 133, 146 & 165.

Give him a night to think it over. Sometimes a new man is anxious to proceed at once — that is sometimes a mistake. The warning is about how quickly to **begin**, not how quickly to **work** the steps.

Cycle of Addiction

Doctor's Opinion, pp. xxviii–xxix



R.I.D. restless, irritable and discontented (sober) → **drink / use** (succumb to the desire — mental obsession, no choice) → **phenomenon of craving** (physical allergy, no control) → **spree** (with or without consequences) → **emerge remorseful** → **firm resolution** → back to R.I.D. — unless the **spiritual solution**.

This cycle is repeated **over and over** unless this person can experience an entire psychic change...

MY CYCLE

What does it look like when I'm R.I.D.? Dry-drunk? Just not drinking or using? *(p. 52 bedevilments)* 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?**

Dr. Silkworth stated that we will repeat this cycle over and over until we are "internally" or "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?

Step Two

"Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

THE IDEA

We Agnostics, pp. 44–57

- Later, God will remove my insanity.
- Do you believe in a Power greater than yourself — **or** are you willing to believe **you** are not the most powerful thing in the world? (You are not God.)
- A connection to a Higher Power is our only mental defense to not get loaded.
- What does "surrender" look like? What does "Let go and let God" even mean?
  - **Let's make a beginning.**

STEPWORK NOTEBOOK

Step 2 bullet points — "I need and want God to ___"

Now we're going to take a look again at your **unmanageability list** and imagine what this would look like if you tried to let God manage all these things for you instead.

For every single thing on your unmanageability list, write a sentence stating what you **"need and want God to do"** for that to be managed properly. This is your base sentence (in bold below). Then list **three ways** (bullet points) God could supernaturally help make that happen. Be specific, and write the bullet points as little prayers.

EXAMPLE

1. **Drugs & Alcohol** — *I need and want God to keep me sober.*
   2. God, take away my desire to use.
   3. God, give me the willingness to get through all 12 steps. (Recovered.)
   4. God, give me opportunities to help others.
5. **Finances** — *I need and want God to teach me responsibility with money.*
   6. God, keep priorities in check. Allocate funds appropriately (bills, probation fees, debt).
   7. God, please help me distinguish between a **need** and a **want**. Don't be materialistic.
   8. God, allow me to live in gratitude and **give** to others.
9. **Anxiety** — *I need and want God to give me peace of mind and serenity.*
   10. God, persuade me to stay consistent in daily prayer and meditation. Seek God.
   11. God, remind me that the center of my anxiety is "I" — my obsession with **me**. (Self-centered.)
   12. God, help me learn what it looks like to rely on **You through** the fear. Let my faith be bigger than my fear.

Do this for **every single thing** on your unmanageability list. Write the bullet points as prayers — giving credit to God / Higher Power, not self, for the change.

Suggestion: these bullet points are now your prayer life! Every morning! Start praying these bullet points daily, out loud.

Step 2 comes to fruition around Step 10 — see the 10th Step promises on page 84: "restored to sanity" … "sanity will have returned."

Resentment Inventory

 # _____) _____ · Big Book Awakening, Section 7 — Step Four, p. 57

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

I am resentful at: *(ref. p. 65 example)* _____

The cause: *(ref. p. 65 example)* _____

_____

Affects my: Keep Columns 1 & 2 in mind while writing the 3rd Column considerations *(ref. p. 65 ¶3 line 3, "we considered it carefully")*. Look at the 3rd Column and consider the opposite of each sentence to let the inventory reveal your fears behind each of the seven areas of self. *(ref. p. 65 example and p. 67 ¶3, "Notice the word 'fear' is bracketed alongside the difficulties")*.

Fear of being... *(not good enough)*

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)..."*

_____ ( )

_____ ( )

_____ ( )

The Realization & the Fourth Column

Big Book Awakening, Section 7 — Step Four, p. 61

"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 ¶3, "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.

"God, this is a sick person like me. How can I be helpful to them? God, save me from being angry. Thy will be done."

FOURTH COLUMN

"Where had I been…"

Entirely disregard the other person involved; this is **our** inventory, not theirs. "Where was I to blame, before? during? after? What did I do?" *(ref. p. 67 ¶2)*. Look at the things you do to hold on to the resentment. Look at things you do to protect yourself and how you look; ex: "I shun, I gossip, I yell." Stay focused on what you've seen so far in 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 above fears drive the delusions that result in the attitude that are behind the actions. *(ref. p. 62 ¶1, "driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking and self-pity [my attitude]…")* Consider if there are any other fears that should be on the fear list. Consider the opposite of each fear; if it applies, add it to the list. Ex: being alone / being committed? Failing / succeeding? *(ref. p. 68 ¶1, "We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them.")*

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

Fear Inventory

Read Big Book p. 67, "Notice the word fear..." to p. 68, "...outgrow fear."

STEPWORK NOTEBOOK

Carry over all your fears from the Resentment Inventory (4th 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/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 from men, lack healthy boundaries.
3. **Self-reliance** — I get into relationship after relationship to avoid being alone. I seek attention and compliments from everyone. Surround myself with the opposite sex. Lie to myself and say that women/men hate me. 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. Not put myself out there for attention. Seek platonic friendships only. Do not text the opposite sex. Be genuine. Have healthy, respectful boundaries. Find self-worth and validation through God's eyes and not people's eyes.

FEAR

one set per fear — continue in the stepwork notebook

1. Fear of: _____

2. Why: _____

3. Self-reliance: _____

4. Better way: _____

FEAR

1. Fear of: _____

2. Why: _____

3. Self-reliance: _____

4. Better way: _____

Sex Inventory Worksheet

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

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...

P 69 · Section 7 – Step Four · 4th Step guide pages out of the Big Book Awakening 12 Step workbook, book version August 2006 · www.bigbookawakening.com

Sex Inventory Worksheet

"God please help me see the truth about my conduct in relationships" · the nine questions, ref. p. 69 ¶1

Name: _____ **Relationship:** _____

Look at each relationship and answer these nine questions.

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 this for writing the Sex Ideal.*

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

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

THE 20-10-5

After completing the Sex Inventory, we move on to our Sane & Sound assignment. We use the **20-10-5** format for this exercise. Many other interpretations of this can be found in AA pockets.

Written assignment: 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**.

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

Steps 5 – 8 Outline

All done in the same day — one fluid spiritual process

STEP 5 — PART ONE

with sponsor

We admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. Read pp. 70 to 75 — we get blocked off from God via self-will. We are prepared for a **long talk**! Life & death errand… (drowning men, p. 28).

- Resentment Inventory — p. 64
- Fear Inventory — p. 67
- Sex Inventory — p. 68
- Sane & Sound Sex Ideal — p. 69

This process enables me to "swallow and digest some big chunks of truth about myself," revealing my **causes & conditions**, a.k.a. character defects — which *is* what blocks me off from God / Higher Power.

While the sponsee reads his inventory, the sponsor is writing down the list of admitted character defects. When done, fold it and put it in the Big Book at page 67, to be read at Step 6 later that evening.

STEP 5 — PART TWO

alone at home

- Returning home, find a quiet place. One hour begins.
- Review the first five proposals / steps.
  - Take the book off the shelf, turn to page 59.
  - Review Step 1 (including assignments). Am I solid so far?
  - Review Step 2 (including assignments). Am I solid so far?
  - Review Step 3 (including assignments). Say the 3rd Step Prayer.
  - Review Step 4 (including **all** inventory). Am I solid so far?
  - Review Step 5. Have I been honest and thorough with God and someone else? If anything comes up, call sponsor.
  - If you can say "Yes, I'm solid," then move on to Step 6!

Point of no return. Last chance to be entirely honest. No secrets! Omit vs. forget.

STEP 6

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Open the list of character defects, or write your own list based on the truth shown to you.

Are you willing to let God remove **all** these defects? If not, pray for willingness, then move to Step 7.

STEP 7

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Do the 7th Step Prayer — choosing to give God all your good & bad.

Re-do the 7th Step Prayer for **every single defect** on your list. Be genuine and take your time with God!

STEP 8

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Go back through your inventory to create this list. Also add the people or institutions you harmed that did not end up on your inventory, **including financial**. Text the Step 8 list to your sponsor.

You've completed Steps 5–8! **Spiritual hangover** — fill up with spiritual things for several days. Prepare your heart for amends.

Step Nine

"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others." · BB pp. 76–84

THE APPROACH

"Now we need more action, without which we find that 'Faith without works is dead.'" Taking your Step 8 list, we're going to prepare ourselves to make **direct** amends **wherever** possible.

If you haven't the will to do this, you pray and ask God to help you become willing. Remember, it was agreed at the beginning we would go to **any lengths** for victory over alcohol.

Do not lead with a spiritual approach; instead communicate a sincere desire to set right the wrong. **The best apology is changed behavior.**

THREE COMMON EXCUSES

the Book names them

1. The person has done more harm to me than I have done to them.
2. I have acquired a better attitude and I feel over the situation, and I do not want to rehash this old situation.
3. I hate this person. They are not healthy and I do not want them in my life. They will think I want to be friends again.

Nevertheless — we make these amends anyway. We take the lead. Take the bit in our teeth.

AMENDS PROCESS OUTLINE

1. Sponsee highlights the amends list in **Local – Non-Local – Ex's**. This is the order to write out and do them.
2. Go over written amends with sponsor to ensure the language is humbling.
3. Make **first approach** — ask for permission to do the amends. Never spring an amends on an unsuspecting person.
4. Make an appointment for amends that is convenient to the recipient.
5. Make in-person / direct amends.

Under no condition do we ever criticize the other person or argue. We do not discuss their faults — we stick to our own.

MONEY POINTS

We do not dodge our creditors — we pay back all debts. The amends list should include financials owed (to family, medical debt, credit debt, child support, etc.). We are allowed to **arrange the best deal we can**.

The Book says we may drink if we are fearful and avoid our financial amends.

CRIMINAL OFFENSES

a common form of trouble too

We must be willing to go to jail if need be. We may lose our jobs and there may be consequences of being honest about past behaviors, but we must not shrink at anything.

Reminding ourselves that we have decided to go to any lengths to find a spiritual experience, we ask that we be given strength and direction to do the right thing no matter what the personal consequences may be.

However — we are *not* allowed to implicate other people; we must secure their consent first. We are not allowed to save our own skin at another person's expense.

Step Nine, continued

infidelity · living out changed behavior · direct vs. living amends · the Ninth Step Promises

INFIDELITY

bottom of p. 81

Does she **know**? Does she **suspect**? Does she **not know**? See the bottom of page 81 for guiding general principles to follow. No outsider can appraise such an intimate situation. Let God be the final judge.

LIVING OUT CHANGED BEHAVIOR IN THE HOME

We alcoholics are tornadoes, roaring through the lives of others. We feel a man is **unthinking** when he says sobriety is **enough**! Just being sober is not the goal — not enough. We can't make amends for unchanged behaviors. Long period of reconstruction ahead.

Are amends an apology, or not? Do we say we're sorry? **Yes** — but more than just that!

DIRECT AMENDS VS. LIVING AMENDS

Direct amends first, then live out the changed behavior. Don't use living amends as a cop-out to avoid direct amends. Our behavior will convince them more than our words — **but the words must come first**.

- Wrongs we can never fully right — ongoing for life.
- Some people can't be seen (death / prison). Send them an honest letter.
- Reasons for postponement? Save money to travel there; significant harm and time needs to pass first; ex-lovers.

THE NINTH STEP PROMISES

pp. 83–84

These are all **internal** changes that begin to manifest halfway through the amends process. These are not external things. They are clues that the personality change (sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism) is beginning to manifest internally.

THE SPONSOR'S ROLE

Sponsors do not micro-manage amends. We provide the guidelines from the Big Book, the outline of the process, and help them get started. The remainder of their amends is between them and God. A sponsor is there for any additional guidance needed later as well.

Once a sponsee has completed **3–4 local amends** (hopefully in a week) we move on to **Step 10**!

Step Ten

"Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it." · BB pp. 84–85

We begin to practice Step 10 — commence this way of living — **as we cleaned up the past** (while on Step 9).

10TH STEP ACTION WORDS

- **WATCH**
- **ASK**
- **DISCUSS**
- **TURN**

DIRECTIONS FOR DOING A 10TH STEP

As you go through your day — during the day — continue to **WATCH** for these four things:

1. Selfishness
2. Dishonesty
3. Resentment
4. Fear

When these crop up we do these four things, in **this** order:

1. **ASK.** Pray and ask God to remove how you feel.
2. **DISCUSS** with someone immediately (someone that won't co-sign your malady).
3. (If applicable) make amends quickly if you have harmed anyone.
4. **TURN** and go help someone else.

THE PROMISES

Step 10 has some amazing promises given to us. Most importantly, that **sanity around alcohol has returned**. We are placed in a position of neutrality — safe and protected. We are recovered from the seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. The mental obsession / insanity has been removed. We are not fighting the drink idea any longer, so long as we stay spiritually fit.

THE WARNINGS

Step 10 also has some stern warnings for us to heed and watch out for. Don't let up on your spiritual program of action and rest on your laurels. **A laurel is your own achievement.** You are not cured of alcoholism. Recovered and cured are two different things. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition.

We can stay recovered for good and for all if we are willing to stay spiritually fit each day. However, if I become spiritually sick, living my life in self-reliance again, then I will lose my connection to my Higher Power, the insanity will return, I will become *un*recovered, and I will drink again — and with us, to drink is to die.

We must continually try to grow along spiritual lines. We must learn deeper surrenders and a deeper reliance on God. No one does this perfectly. We are not saints. We are looking for spiritual progress, not spiritual perfection.

Companion sheet for the sponsee: **Step Ten — Watch · Ask · Discuss · Turn** (RADS, PARS, the written tenth step, Step 10 Like Us).

Step Eleven

"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for the knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out." · read from the bottom of p. 85 to p. 88

STEPWORK NOTEBOOK

the nightly notebook

Make a nightly review outline in your stepwork notebook, to copy later into your nightly review notebook.

You will need a **brand new, three-subject, spiral notebook**. This will be your nightly notebook. Only your nightly reviews will go in this notebook. Nightlies are to be done when you retire at night, **each night**. When completed, you take a picture of it and text it to your sponsor each night for accountability.

You address these **12 questions in this order** from the Big Book on page 86, always ending with **5 to 10 gratefuls** to avoid morbid reflection.

The first four questions are like a mini fourth column from the resentment inventory. In other words, if you have a resentment, you will always have a selfish thought, a delusion, and an afraid attached to that resentment. If you do not have a resentment, your answer will be "no." But you should always have a selfish thought, delusion, and afraid answer **every day**.

The only three questions that could possibly have a "No" answer are: **1. Resentful, 5. Apology and 6. Secrets**. All other questions should have an answer every evening.

NIGHTLY REVIEW OUTLINE

Date. Today, where was I:

1. **Resentful** — did anyone or anything or situation bother me today?
2. **Selfish** — what is my self-centered thought attached to the above resentment?
3. **Dishonest** — (or delusion? lie to others or lie to self) what is the lie that I believe based on the above thought?
4. **Afraid** — what is my fear based on the above delusion?
5. **Apology** — do I owe an apology to anyone; if so, for what?
6. **Secrets** — is there anything in your conscience that you haven't told another person?
7. **Kind & Loving** — list people you were kind to today and how you were kind.
8. **Done Better** — list things you could have done better today.
9. **Thinking of Self** — put a % of how much you thought about yourself / wants / feelings today.
10. **Stream of Life** — what actions have you taken today that benefit you **spiritually**?
11. **Corrective Measures** — write this as a prayer; address the things you see above that you need God to help you correct tomorrow.
12. **Gratefuls** — list 5–10 things you are grateful for today.

Companion sheet for the sponsee: **Step Eleven — The Nightly Review** (the twelve questions with the Book's wording, a worksheet page to copy into the notebook, and bigbook.it for the morning reading).

Step Twelve

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and practice these principles in all our affairs." · read BB pp. 89–103

> *"...nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail."*
>
> — Working With Others, p. 89

THE QUESTIONS

What is **intensive work** with alcoholics? What are the **other activities**?

Frequent contact with newcomers and each other is the bright spot of our lives. Am I placing myself in frequent contact with newcomers and the fellowship?

You can find potential prospects at: 12-step meetings, clubs, rehabs, detox centers, sober living homes, from therapists, counselors, doctors and churches.

A SPONSOR HAS FOUR JOBS

1. Take you through the steps
2. Hold you accountable
3. Smash your delusions
4. Direct you to God / Higher Power

WITH A PROSPECT

- Find out all you can about him. Does he want to stop drinking for good and for all? If not, do not waste time trying to persuade him. You may ruin a future opportunity.
- What are his behaviors, problems, background, seriousness of his condition and religious leanings?
- Don't deal with him if drunk, unless the family needs your help. Be certain of the **type** of help you offer first.
- At first engage in general conversation, then turn the talk to some phase of drinking. Let him talk so you know better how to proceed. Match his mood: serious / humorous. Win his confidence first.
- **Spend time** explaining the illness of chronic alcoholism. The two qualifying questions on p. 44. Does he believe he has the allergy of the body and the insanity of the mind? No control / no choice? Cycle of addiction. New prospect Step Zero page.
- **Do not brand him alcoholic** — let him draw his own conclusion! If he has admitted to you he is a real / chronic alcoholic, you may proceed with dwelling on the hopeless feature of the malady.
- Use everyday language to describe spiritual principles.
- Faith alone is insufficient to recovery from alcoholism. To be vital, faith must be accompanied by self-sacrifice and unselfish, constructive action. We do not debate or have opinions on religion.
- The prospect can choose any conception of God / Higher Power that makes sense to him. We are *not* creating a god, though. We are choosing a conception — any conception.
- Sponsors are not bankers, financial advisors, or nurses for sprees. Do not enable or band-aid their lives. We are not there to lessen the misery of a relapse. The more hopeless they feel, the better. He may be more receptive when depressed and more willing to accept the help we offer.

Step Twelve, continued

how to begin with a man · what the sponsor is and is not · the foundation stone

BEGINNING WITH A MAN

- Explain to the prospect how hopeless you once were, how you took the steps under the guidance of a sponsor, have recovered from that hopeless state of mind and body, and now you aim to be helpful to him as part of your own recovery. **He is helping you more than you are helping him.**
- Give him a night / day to think it over and let you know tomorrow if he would like to work the steps with you. Sometimes a new man is anxious to proceed at once, and you may be tempted to let him do so. This is sometimes a mistake — if he has trouble later, he's likely to say that you rushed him. **This is a warning about how quickly to *begin* the steps with someone, not about how quickly to *work* the steps with someone.**
- He should not be pushed or prodded by you, his wife or his friends. If he is to find God, the desire must come from within. If he thinks he can get sober in some other way or some other approach, please encourage him to follow his own conscience. We have no monopoly on God or spirituality. We simply have an approach that worked for us.
- Don't be discouraged if your prospect does not respond; search out another alcoholic and try again. We sponsors should be seeking out, looking for and trying to find those with alcoholism whom we can help.
- There will be lots of inconveniences associated with sponsorship. Sometimes they are broke or homeless. Sometimes we let them live with us in our homes for a short period of time. Sometimes our vacations or sleep are interrupted. Sometimes we have to visit courts, jails, and rehabs or deal with their family conditions. We will have to meet, and it is for free — and we should be willing to be inconvenienced.

THE SPIRITUAL PRECEDES THE MATERIAL

A person can get well, regardless of any external circumstances, provided that he be willing to learn how to trust in God and clean house. **Recovery is not dependent upon people or externals. It is dependent upon our relationship with God.**

A few promises in Chapter 7, pp. 100–101 — assuming you're spiritually fit, you can go anywhere and do anything. Recovered alcoholics are able to meet these conditions without drinking. An alcoholic who cannot meet them still has an alcoholic mind — meaning there's something wrong with his spiritual status.

THE 12TH STEP BELIEF

Any scheme of combating alcoholism which proposes to shield the sick man from temptation or triggers or H.A.L.T. is doomed to failure. If the alcoholic tries, he may succeed for a time, but he usually winds up with a bigger explosion than ever.

Triggers, people, places & things, geographical changes, HALT, etc. are only important early on for a *non-recovered* alcoholic. But once recovered — the insanity is removed; we are spiritually fit — we can go anywhere and do anything without danger, provided our motive is good and our spiritual condition is secure. When a shaky period comes, you had better work with another alcoholic instead.

THE FOUNDATION STONE

Your job now is to be at the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others! **Helping others is the foundation stone of our recovery.**

Unity – Service – Recovery. All three sides of the triangle, to stay in the center of the circle of AA. This is what it means to be **active** in the program of recovery… not just the fellowship.

Transcribed from the Relevant Recovery Sponsorship Workshop packet (2024). Big Book Awakening worksheet pages (Section 7, pp. 57, 61, 69, 70) are © Big Book Awakening, www.bigbookawakening.com. Page references are to Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th edition.