The Twelve Steps in Ten Minutes

the pitch — the problem, the solution, the action, and where the Big Book gives the directions

0:00	1:30	3:30	5:30	8:30
The battery	**The problem** · Step One	**The solution** · Step Two	**The action** · Steps 3–12	**The ask** · a Book, a sponsor

0:00 · DEAD BATTERY

problem → solution → action

You put the key in the ignition and the damn thing won't start. Sit and talk about it until hell freezes over and you go nowhere. Look under the hood: a corroded battery cable. Now you understand the **problem** and the **solution** is evident — but knowing it doesn't start the car. Get the cable, replace it, and you're on your way. That is the **action**. The Book is built in that order, and so are the Steps.

> *To show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the main purpose of this book.* — Foreword to First Edition, p. xiii

☐ *How many meetings must you attend to have a spiritual experience?* yes / no

☐ *How many Steps must you take?* yes / no

1:30 · THE PROBLEM — STEP ONE

the Doctor's Opinion through p. 43

The problem comes first, because nothing works until it is understood: an allergy of the **body** — the craving once we start — and an obsession of the **mind** — the thought that starts us.

> *We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics. This is the first step in recovery.* — BB p. 30 ¶2

The test. "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

☐ *Once you start, do you control the amount?* yes / no

3:30 · THE SOLUTION — STEP TWO

pp. 44–57: fourteen pages, one job

If **lack of power** is my problem, **a Power greater than myself** is the solution — and the recovered alcoholic in front of me has found one. Fourteen pages clear away the old ideas about God so a man can choose his own conception.

> *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.* — BB p. 45 ¶1

☐ *"Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?"* BB p. 47 ¶2

believe / willing / no

5:30 · THE ACTION — STEPS THREE TO TWELVE

pp. 58–103

> *If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it—then you are ready to take certain steps.* — BB p. 58 ¶2

Step Three is a decision (pp. 60–63) — in practice, asking a recovered alcoholic *"Will you be my sponsor?"* How do you know you took it? *"Because you begin to take Step Four."*

"Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning" BB p. 63 ¶4. **Four to Nine** clean house and end in the promises; **Ten to Twelve** are how we live from then on: "There is action and more action." BB p. 88

8:30 · THE ASK — THIRTY-THREE PAGES AND A SPONSOR

count them

You may have heard there are only thirty-three pages of directions. Count them: **page 30** (Step One), **page 47** (Step Two), and **pages 58 through 88** (Steps Three to Eleven). Thirty-three. Step Twelve gets a chapter of its own on top (pp. 89–103), and its prayer waits on p. 164.

"Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path." BB p. 58 ¶1 · "Further on, clear-cut directions are given showing how we recovered." BB p. 29 ¶1 · *"The only thing between you and a really good life is the first 103 pages of this book."* — Joe McF

- **Get a Big Book.** Open it tonight to page xi and read to page 43 — the first instruction a good sponsor gives.
- **Get a sponsor** who has taken the Steps out of this book, and take them the way the book says — in weeks, not years.
- **Then take somebody else through them.** Of 500 injection drug users followed for a year, three out of four who sponsored others stayed abstinent (Crape et al. 2002).

Thirty-three pages. A sponsor who has been through them. Start tonight.

The Sponsor's Job

what you are for, what the Book says the approach looks like, and how to read this guide

A SPONSOR HAS FOUR JOBS

1. Take him through the Steps.
2. Hold him accountable.
3. Smash his delusions.
4. Direct him to God — a Power greater than himself.

"When you don't care, I can't; and when you do care, I must." · "A sponsor is someone you are willing to surrender your better judgment to."

HELPING OTHERS IS THE FOUNDATION STONE

Working With Others, p. 97

> *Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery. A kindly act once in a while isn't enough. You have to act the Good Samaritan every day, if need be.* — BB p. 97 ¶1

The Baltimore study (Crape et al. 2002) — 500 injection drug users in NA/AA, one year: not sponsored, 44.7 % abstinent; sponsored, 39.1 %; **of those who sponsored others, 75 %** stayed abstinent. Being a sponsor, not having one, is what the numbers reward. *You are going to become a sponsor.*

THE CONDITIONS OF THE APPROACH

There Is a Solution, pp. 18–19

> *That the man who is making the approach has had the same difficulty, that he obviously knows what he is talking about, that his whole deportment shouts at the new prospect that he is a man with a real answer, that he has no attitude of Holier Than Thou, nothing whatever except the sincere desire to be helpful; that there are no fees to pay, no axes to grind, no people to please, no lectures to be endured—these are the conditions we have found most effective. After such an approach many take up their beds and walk again.* — BB p. 18 ¶5

The man "who is properly armed with facts about himself, can generally win the entire confidence of another alcoholic in a few hours. Until such an understanding is reached, little or nothing can be accomplished." BB p. 18 ¶4 — so your own log and loser list, your own story, is the tool. **He should do half the talking. Your story is the icebreaker, not the centerpiece.**

WHEN HE SAYS "YES, BUT…"

four things he may not believe yet

1. I don't believe I have a problem.
2. I don't believe the problem is grave enough to warrant a solution that requires sacrifice.
3. I don't believe you have a solution.
4. I don't believe your solution will work for me.

Each one is a step to go back to — the first two are Step One, the last two are Step Two. And a rule for yourself: *if I say I find something disagreeable, yet do nothing, I have a little secret — I find the solution more disagreeable than the problem.*

"RECOVERED" — THE BOOK'S WORD, SIXTEEN TIMES

"We, of Alcoholics Anonymous, are more than one hundred men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body." — Foreword to First Edition, p. xiii

The word appears sixteen times: pp. xiii (twice), xv, xvii, xxv, xxxi, 17, 20, 29, 45, 90, 96, 113, 132, 133, 146. Have him find them. Recovered is what the Book offers; "recovering" is what we say when we have not taken the Steps.

How to read this guide. Every page is one sitting's material. Lines marked **Ask** → are questions for him — get a yes or a no. Serif quotations are the Book's, each with its page and paragraph; everything else is the sponsor's. An **Assignment** band closes each Step with what he takes home. "Companion" names a printed sheet to hand him. Your own rule: *no sponsee appointment today — go to a meeting.*

Talk his language — an aside, never the driver. Dr. Bob on Bill: "In other words, he talked my language." BB p. 180 ¶2 And the Book to us: "you had better use everyday language to describe spiritual principles." BB p. 93 ¶1 When the Book's words are not landing, *Are You a Bit Fucked?* has a second set of questions for each Step, put the way a friend would put them — ask one, then take him back to the page. **In his language** → Step 1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5 · 6 · 7 · 8 · 9 · 10 · 11 · 12

Step Zero — The First Meeting

qualify both directions, and find out whether he is sponsorable

JOE'S FIRST CALL

two questions that are Step One in miniature

"Do you want to quit drinking?" — "Yes, sir." — "Can you quit drinking?" — "No." — "That's probably the first honest thing I've ever heard come out of your mouth."

Then the three lies and two secrets: *a lie about who you are, who the world is, and who the people in it are. Two secrets: you always knew you were smarter than you were ever able to demonstrate, and you always knew you wanted to love and be loved more than you were ever able to display or receive — and for those two inabilities you found people, places and things to blame. That's where Alcoholics Anonymous begins.*

IS HE SPONSORABLE?

three questions, and one warning

- ☐ *Will you take directions?* yes / no
- ☐ *Will you take actions that go contrary to your emotions?*
- ☐ *Will you live by the sponsorship principle — a sponsor and a sponsee are a group conscience of two?* yes / no

"I'll listen to your sincerity or insincere sincerity with my eyes." — Joe McF. yes / no For a man with time: **Ask** → In what areas of your life are you experiencing lack, limitation, conflict, despair or separation? · Do you believe God can take you further? If you do, why hasn't He? — and *the reason he left his last sponsor is the reason he will leave you*, so listen.

QUALIFY — BOTH DIRECTIONS

Relevant Recovery, p. 1 · Working With Others, pp. 91–92

- Are you on any mind-altering substances or medicines? Is the brain clear? "It is imperative that a man's brain be cleared before he is approached" BB p. xxvi ¶6 — Cameron's three conditions: *an honest desire to stop, detox, rigorous stepwork.*
- **He qualifies himself to you.** We do not sponsor hard drinkers (pp. 20–21): "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 Some folks *do* get here by mistake — help them get to the right rooms.
- **You qualify yourself to him.** "Tell him enough about your drinking habits, symptoms, and experiences to encourage him to speak of himself." BB p. 91 ¶3 *Fish heavy by sharing your own log and loser list; then share what your life is like today.* "The message which can interest and hold these alcoholic people must have depth and weight." BB p. xxviii ¶2
- "Show him the mental twist which leads to the first drink of a spree." BB pp. 91–92 Has he lost the power of **choice**? Has he lost **control**? The cycle of addiction on the companion sheet *Cycle of Addiction — My Cycle*; the drowning man and the logs on *My Log & Loser List* — and say it now: **the Loser List is the unmanageability list Step Two will pray from.**
- "Be careful not to brand him as an alcoholic. Let him draw his own conclusion." BB p. 92 ¶1 **You don't have to convince me — you must convince yourself.** Desperation, on a scale of one to ten? *Ten.*

In his language → Step One — *are you a bit fucked?* — when the qualifying asks meet a shrug.

THE ROAD MAP

what happens after today

1. **Today — first contact.** Stories, the Book, the question, the agreement. Assignment #1, then twenty-four hours to decide. Nobody pushes.
2. **Meeting #1 — Step One.** The cycle, the log and loser list, the four things that will not keep you sober, Step Two's one question. Assignment #2: pp. 60–63 with his own name in them.
3. **Meeting #2 — the abandonment list,** dictated one line at a time. Assignment #3: meditate on it; *he* calls when he is ready for the Third Step.
4. **Meeting #3 — Step Three, taken.** On our knees. Then at once into Step Four — Columns 1 and 2 only, and a date for the Fifth Step.

THE DECISION

"give him a chance to think it over"

> *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.* — BB p. 95 ¶1

The warning is about how quickly to *begin* with a man, not how quickly to *work* the Steps. He calls tomorrow with a yes or a no. A clean **no** means no pushing, no chasing, no hard feelings: "If he does not want to stop drinking, don't waste time trying to persuade him. You may spoil a later opportunity." BB p. 90 ¶1 A **yes** means the agreement on the next page, signed in the front of his Book.

The Agreement

hand him this page — keep it in the front of the Big Book

THE AGREEMENT

check each one off together

The question — ***Are you willing to go to any lengths for victory over addiction, and to quit for good and for all?***

- ☐ Willing to take the steps **QUICKLY**. (Yes… it IS a race.)
- ☐ Willing to attend **specific meetings** early on. (Literature-based.)
- ☐ Willing to focus on **JUST the Big Book** till the steps are done.
- ☐ Willing to be completely **HONEST! NOW** — not after the 5th step. (Sex, checks, meds.)
- ☐ Willing to be **open-minded about anonymity**. (It's OK to tell folks you're in recovery.)
- ☐ Willing to accept a **service commitment**… NOW. ("Let him go as far as he likes in helping other alcoholics," p. 129.)
- ☐ Willing to stay accountable in **all three parts of the fellowship** — recovery, unity, service (the circle and triangle). A three-legged stool stands on all three legs.
- ☐ Willing to learn about the **Traditions**.
- ☐ Willing to follow suggestions about **meeting etiquette**.
- ☐ Willing to **keep your appointments** with me. (Let's respect each other's time.)
- ☐ Willing to **call and check in EVERY DAY** while we're in the steps. (A two-minute call counts — the routine is what carries you between meetings.)
- ☐ Willing to have **assignments done on time**. No assignment, no meeting — and that only delays you.
- ☐ Willing to **sponsor others**. Everything you receive through these steps you agree to pass on. This is the non-starter: yes or no.

MEETING ETIQUETTE & TRADITIONS

- ☐ Willing to **arrive early & stay late**.
- ☐ Willing to take your **Big Book to EVERY meeting**.
- ☐ Willing to **share solution**. (Meetings are not a dumping ground for your problems. It is NOT group therapy.)
- ☐ **No cellphone** during the meeting.
- ☐ Coffee & bathroom **BEFORE** the meeting starts.
- ☐ **Anonymity** — explained.
- ☐ What it means to be **RECOVERED** — pp. xiii, xv, xvii, xxv, xxxi, 17, 20, 29, 45, 90, 96, 113, 132, 133 & 146.

FOUR VOWS, IN THE BOOK'S OWN WORDS — WRITE THEM IN THE FRONT COVER OF YOUR BIG BOOK, AND SIGN THEM THERE TOO

1. *I am willing to go to any lengths for victory over alcohol* (addiction) — p. 76 ¶3
2. *I have decided to go to any lengths to find a spiritual experience.* p. 79 ¶1
3. *I will take every necessary step, submit to anything to get well, to stop drinking* (using) *forever.* p. 142 ¶1
4. *I want to recover, and I will go to any extreme to do so.* p. 142 ¶4 · p. 90 ¶3

SPONSEE _____ DATE _____ SPONSOR _____ DATE _____

For the sponsor. The vows are the Book's — "Remember it was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol" BB p. 76 ¶3; "Reminding ourselves that we have decided to go to any lengths to find a spiritual experience" BB p. 79 ¶1; "Will he take every necessary step, submit to anything to get well, to stop drinking forever?" BB p. 142 ¶1; "that he will go to any extreme to do so" BB p. 142 ¶4. Written in the front of his book and signed. When he balks later — at the Fourth Step, at an amends — *"Were you lying then, or are you lying now?"* — Joe McF

What happens next. Call me tomorrow with your yes or your no. Then Meeting #1 is Step One, Meeting #2 the abandonment list, Meeting #3 the Step.

Step One — The Problem

"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable."

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.

Powerless over the body and powerless over the mind where alcohol is concerned. *We are screwed.* 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

THE "EFFECT" PARAGRAPH — DISSECT IT WHOLE

pp. xxviii–xxix

> *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 p. xxviii ¶4

- ☐ *Do you drink or use because you like the effect?* yes / no
- ☐ *Do you admit it is injurious?* yes / no
- ☐ *Is being loaded what feels normal, and sober what feels wrong?* yes / no
- ☐ *Have you emerged remorseful, resolved never again — and repeated it, over and over?* yes / no

First question: what is the effect? A few drinks changed the way we thought and felt, at once — the promises read backwards. *The unmanageability is in the last sentence:* a mind that cannot tell true from false, repeating the spree "over and over," firm resolutions and all — *because the liar always wins the argument.*

THE QUALIFYING ASKS

the Book's own questions — a yes or a no to each

- ☐ *"If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely" — do you honestly want to stop, and based on your log list, have you been able to stay stopped?* yes / no
- ☐ *"or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take" — once you start, do you control the amount?* BB p. 44 ¶1
- ☐ *"The idea that somehow, someday he will control and enjoy his drinking is the great obsession of every abnormal drinker."* BB p. 30 ¶1 *— is that your experience? "Many pursue it into the gates of insanity or death."* yes / no yes / no
- ☐ *"We are without defense against the first drink."* BB p. 24 ¶1 *— based on your log list, is this your experience?* yes / no
- ☐ *"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."* BB p. 30 ¶2 *— do you fully concede it? Are you convinced you are sick?* yes / no
- ☐ *"we had but two alternatives: One was to go on to the bitter end ... and the other, to accept spiritual help."* BB p. 25 ¶3 *— the crossroads: are you ready to accept spiritual help, and willing to make the effort?* yes / no

You can't almost take the first step — it's like your plane exploded and you almost got a parachute. There is no good news at the end of the first step. — Joe McF · **You are now properly armed with the facts about yourself.**

Step One — The Problem, continued

"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable."

THE MENTAL OBSESSION

More About Alcoholism, pp. 30–43

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. *The feeling is the costume; the obsession is what's wearing it.*

> *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

☐ *Finish the sentence: "Someday, when ____, I'll be able to ____." Write it down — it is a reservation, and Step Three will ask for it.* yes / no

☐ *First consequence — what year? Last use — what date? How many times in between? Say the number out loud.*

☐ *When you were clean, were you happy clean? If no, that is untreated alcoholism — what the other eleven Steps are for.* yes / no yes / no

Companion: *The Mental Obsession — the four ways the thought gets in* (Jim, the man of thirty, the deliberate drink, Fred's blank spot).

THE PROMISES, READ BACKWARDS

pp. 83–84 → the effect

Go to page 83. Begin each of the Ninth Step Promises with **"In the early days of my drinking, when I had a few drinks..."** — and ask him, one by one, *did you?*

- ...I knew a new freedom and a new happiness. *Did you?*
- ...I comprehended the word serenity and I knew peace. *Did a few drinks replace the turmoil?*
- ...fear of people and of economic insecurity left me. *Better have a couple and figure it out.*

Land it here: **that** is the effect — what an alcoholic gets from a few drinks that a normal drinker never does. *Your problem was never the drug. The drug was your solution. Your problem is what you are like without it.* Then the p. 52 bedevilments, read sober. Companion: *The Promises, Read Backwards.*

FOUR THINGS THAT WILL NOT KEEP YOU SOBER

find them in the first 63 pages

1. **Self-knowledge** — "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
2. **Will power** — "Our so-called will power becomes practically non-existent." BB p. 24 ¶1
3. **A long period of sobriety** — "that his long period of sobriety and self-discipline had qualified him to drink as other men." BB p. 32 ¶2
4. **Other people** — "he has probably placed himself beyond human aid, and unless locked up, may die or go permanently insane." BB p. 24 ¶4

A fifth, for later: *hiding* — "any scheme of combating alcoholism which proposes to shield the sick man from temptation is doomed to failure." BB p. 101 ¶2 Your log list is the material path, already tried; the logs sink. *If the allergy were the whole problem, detoxes would produce winners.*

THE ESSENTIALS

Appendix II — "these are indispensable"

"Willingness, honesty and open mindedness are the essentials of recovery." Appendix II, p. 568 — watch out for the yeah-buts and the maybes.

☐ *Willingness — are you willing to show up and do the work?* yes / no

☐ *Honesty — will you answer questions honestly with a simple yes or no?* yes / no

☐ *Open-mindedness — will you lay aside any prejudices, experience the program, and assess the results for yourself?* yes / no

ASSIGNMENT

Read the Doctor's Opinion through page 43 with a pen, marking every line that is you. Find the four things that will not keep you sober. Finish *My Log & Loser List* and *My Cycle*. Call me tomorrow: yes or no. Then call every day — a two-minute call counts.

Step Two — The Door

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

EBBY, SOBER

Bill's Story, pp. 9–12 · We Agnostics, p. 45

> *He was sober. It was years since I could remember his coming to New York in that condition. I was amazed.* — BB p. 9

> *Had this power originated in him? Obviously it had not. There had been no more power in him than there was in me at that minute; and this was none at all.* — BB p. 11 ¶4

Both men were powerless. Ebby was sober; Bill was dying. Ebby had found a Power Bill didn't know about — and that gave Bill hope. It takes no great mind: if **lack of power** is my problem, **a Power greater than myself** is the solution — and the recovered alcoholic in front of me has found it. *You won't change — but you will be changed. If you could change, you wouldn't be here.*

THE ONE SHORT QUESTION

p. 47

> *We needed to ask ourselves but one short question. "Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?" 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.* — BB p. 47 ¶2

☐ *Do you now believe, or are you even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than yourself?* believe / willing / no

The bar is *willing to believe*, not *believe*. "It was only a matter of being willing to believe in a Power greater than myself. Nothing more was required of me to make my beginning." BB p. 12 ¶4 It is *his* conception — not anyone's god handed to him, and explicitly not the people who failed or harmed him. If "Father" language is loaded, he builds the conception from scratch. And when he says nobody can provide the defense: **Ask** → if you can't provide it, and I can't, who can? — *don't answer for him; let it sit.*

In his language → Step Two — *could you not be fucked?* — for the man who bristles at *God*.

STEPWORK — "I NEED AND WANT GOD TO ____"

Relevant Recovery, p. 3

Take his **unmanageability list** — the Loser List — and imagine what each item would look like if he let God manage it instead. For every single thing on the list he writes one sentence, *"I need and want God to…"*, then three ways God could make that happen, written as little prayers:

1. **Drugs & alcohol** — *I need and want God to keep me sober.* God, take away my desire to use. God, give me the willingness to get through all Twelve Steps. God, give me opportunities to help others.
2. **Finances** — *I need and want God to teach me responsibility with money.* God, keep my priorities in check — bills, probation fees, debt. God, help me tell a need from a want. God, let me live in gratitude and give to others.
3. **Anxiety** — *I need and want God to give me peace of mind and serenity.* God, persuade me to stay consistent in daily prayer and meditation. God, remind me that the center of my anxiety is "I." God, help me learn to rely on You *through* the fear — let my faith be bigger than my fear.

These bullet points are now his prayer life — every morning, out loud. Step Two comes to fruition around Step Ten: "For by this time sanity will have returned." BB p. 84 ¶2 The flimsy reed is not a log — it is the first spiritual tool: "What seemed at first a flimsy reed, has proved to be the loving and powerful hand of God." BB p. 28 ¶2

ASSIGNMENT

Read pp. 60–63 and put your own name into the discussion, three times a day. Read pp. 25–29 and 55–57 — the spiritual experience. Write the "I need and want God to…" sentences for every item on your unmanageability list, three prayers each. Make a list of three things you might have trouble abandoning to God, and a list of everyone you know in the fellowship.

Step Three — The Decision

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."

THREE PERTINENT IDEAS — ANSWERED OFF HIS OWN PAPER

p. 60 ¶3

- ☐ *a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives — from your loser list, is this you?* yes / no
- ☐ *b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism — from your log list, are you beyond human aid?* yes / no
- ☐ *c) That God could and would if He were sought — are you willing to believe?* yes / no

"The first requirement is that we be convinced that any life run on self-will can hardly be a success." BB p. 60 ¶8 **Ask** → From your log and loser list, are you convinced? *"Joe, are you convinced? Because we're not reading on."* Read pp. 60–62 together with his own name in them, and stop at the keystone.

THE ROOT, AND THE KEYSTONE

p. 62

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

> *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.* — BB p. 62 ¶3

Cameron's triangle: Step One the **foundation stone** (the log and loser list), Step Two the **cornerstone** (willing to believe, p. 47), Step Three the **keystone** (p. 62) — *fire the liar and hire God.* **Ask** → Do you ever use being "nice" — favors, guilt, being needed — to run the show?

THE ABANDONMENT LIST

a readiness check, not a promise

Dictate the twelve, one line at a time: *my perceived inadequacies · the bad things that have happened to me in the past · the way I spend my time · my finances · my job · the way I treat other people · the way I think about others · my minute-by-minute, day-to-day living · my future · the bad things that might happen to me · my service to others · my sex life.* Would he give control of each to God — **yes**, or **not yet**? The pauses are the point; the line he argues with is the line to stop on. Every not-yet is a fear for Step Four — *what am I afraid would happen if I let go of this?* Companion: *Step Three — The Abandonment List.*

In his language → Step Three — *are you, on your own, going to unfuck yourself?*

TAKE IT — MEETING #3, WHEN HE CALLS

p. 63

He has meditated on the list and called you. *Will = your thinking and your wanting. Life = your doing.* "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 **Ask** → Can you, today, abandon yourself utterly to God? If yes — on our knees, together, and I say it with you.

> 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 · *Offering · Release · Witness · Surrender.* Thee, Thou and Thy are older English for you and your.

ASSIGNMENT

The decision is made once; the abandoning is done daily — this prayer every morning, on awakening. *"How do I know I took it?" — "Because you begin to take Step Four."* Start the Fourth Step on paper — the grudge list, **Columns 1 and 2 only**; stop there and bring it back. Commit to a date for the Fifth Step: ___

Step Four — Columns 1 & 2

"Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves." — the grudge list: who, and why

THREE MANIFESTATIONS OF SELF How It Works, p. 64

> *We took stock honestly. First, we searched out the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure. Being convinced that self, manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us, we considered its common manifestations.* — BB p. 64 ¶2

Three inventories, in the Book's order: **resentment** (pp. 64–67), **fear** (pp. 67–68), **conduct, including sex** (pp. 69–70). Pen to paper — *if you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got.* A process, not an event.

COLUMN 1 — WHO, OR WHAT p. 64

> *In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper. We listed people, institutions or principles with whom we were angry.* — BB p. 64 ¶3

Pray, and write every name that comes: **people** (past or present), **institutions** (the church, a company, the court, AA itself), **principles** (beliefs he is angry at — "God does not care about me," "I'll never be OK without money"). Say this out loud: Columns 1 and 2 are the *safest* part of the inventory — they never ask what he did. People who harmed him as a child belong on the list.

COLUMN 2 — WHY p. 64

"We asked ourselves why we were angry." BB p. 64 ¶3 Next to each name, every specific reason — brief, just enough that he knows why. **Be a camera, not a judge:** what happened, not what he thinks of it. Number each name; letter each cause. Similar resentments can be consolidated; a thing that isn't really a resentment gets marked to come back to.

Before each sitting, the writing prayer (Big Book Awakening, not the Book): *"God, please help me face and be rid of the things in myself which have been blocking me from You, other people and myself."*

THE BOOK'S OWN FOUR p. 65

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2
1) Mr. Brown	A) His attention to my wife. B) Told my wife of my mistress. C) Brown may get my job at the office.
2) Mrs. Jones	A) She's a nut — she snubbed me. B) She committed her husband for drinking; he's my friend. C) She's a gossip.
3) My employer	A) Unreasonable — unjust — overbearing — threatens to fire me for drinking and padding my expense account.
4) My wife	A) Misunderstands and nags. Likes Brown. Wants house put in her name.

"We were usually as definite as this example" BB p. 65 ¶2.

WORKED — THE BOOK'S #1 Mr. Brown

#1) Mr. Brown

- **A)** His attention to my wife.
- **B)** Told my wife of my mistress.
- **C)** Brown may get my job at the office.

(He's after my wife and my job!)

WORKED — A MODERN ONE #15 My Ex-Wife

#15) My ex-wife

- **A)** Uses the kids against me — tells them I'm the reason the family broke apart.
- **B)** Took me to court for more child support even though she knows I'm barely getting by.
- **C)** Won't let me have the kids on holidays unless I do things her way.

(She wants to punish me and control everything, even after the divorce)

Stop here. Columns 1 and 2 only — nothing else — until the list is finished. *You will know when the list is done.* Bring the list to me before touching Column 3. Companions: *Columns 1 & 2 quick reference* (how to write the list, the three kinds of names, memory joggers) and the *Columns 1 & 2 examples packet* (forty-three worked entries, a dad's list among them).

Step Four — Column 3

"Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal, or sex relations, which had been interfered with?"

READ P. 64 ¶3 TO P. 66 ¶2, THEN WRITE

"God, please help me see the truth"

> *On our grudge list we set opposite each name our injuries. Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal, or sex relations, which had been interfered with?* — BB p. 65 ¶1

Put the number and name, then the letter and cause, at the top of the page. For each of the seven areas write **in sentence form** how he was hurt, threatened or interfered with — how he believed the scene should have gone. No "I think" or "I feel" here: the third column shows the selfish, self-centered false notions themselves. **Bracket the fear next to every sentence** as it is written — "Notice that the word 'fear' is bracketed alongside the difficulties with Mr. Brown, Mrs. Jones, the employer, and the wife." BB p. 67 ¶3 The Book's list on p. 65 names five areas; Big Book Awakening splits out pride and pocketbook — seven roles the actor assigns.

AREA	WHAT IT IS	START THE SENTENCE
Self-esteem	my stage character — the role I've assigned myself	*"I am…"*
Pride	how the rest of the players are supposed to see me	*"Others should…" / "No one should…"*
Ambition	what I want out of this scene	*"I want…"*
Security	what I need out of this scene to be okay	*"I need … to be okay"*
Personal relations	my deep-seated idea of what this kind of relationship should look like	*"Wives trust their husbands." "Real friends always agree with me."*
Sex relations	how a real man or a real woman would be in this situation	*"A real man…" / "A real woman…"*
Pocketbook	my finances	*"No one should…" / "Others shouldn't…"*

On self-esteem: if he truly had low self-esteem when Column 1 did Column 2, he would not have been resentful — he would have believed he got what he deserved. Write from high self-esteem and let the bracketed fear show the truth. **Workflow:** many finish faster writing self-esteem and pride for every resentment first, then ambition and security, then the last three.

WORKED

Mr. Brown, A — his attention to my wife

- **Self-esteem** — I am a great guy to have around. *(not good enough)*
- **Pride** — No one should want to take advantage of me. *(taken advantage of)*
- **Ambition** — I want the respect of others. *(not respected)*
- **Security** — I need to not be challenged to be okay. *(losing)*
- **Personal relations** — Fellow workers can trust each other. *(unable to trust)*
- **Sex relations** — A real man stands up for himself. *(weak)*
- **Pocketbook** — No one should interfere with my job security. *(fired)*

WORKED

My ex-wife, A — uses the kids against me

- **Self-esteem** — I am a good father who loves his kids. *(bad father, failure)*
- **Pride** — Others should see that I've changed and that I'm doing my best. *(judged by the past, seen as a drunk)*
- **Ambition** — I want my kids to respect me and want to be with me. *(not respected, not wanted by my own children)*
- **Security** — I need to know my kids still love me to be okay. *(losing my children, abandoned by them)*
- **Personal relations** — Parents should never use children as weapons. *(powerless, manipulated)*
- **Sex relations** — A real man is the head of his household and his family respects him. *(weak, emasculated, irrelevant)*
- **Pocketbook** — No one should take what little I have when I'm trying to rebuild my life. *(broke, unable to provide)*

Step Four — Column 4

"Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened?" — our own mistakes

READ P. 66 ¶3 TO P. 67 ¶3 — THE REALIZATION

"God, please help me see the truth"

> *This was our course: We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick. Though we did not like their symptoms and the way these disturbed us, they, like ourselves, were sick too.* — BB p. 66 ¶4

Before each fourth column, in paragraph form: *"How have I done the things I've resented in Column 2 to the person in Column 1, and to others?"* (Skip this when Column 1 is not a person.) Then the Fourth Step prayer, from the same paragraph:

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

WHERE HAD I BEEN…

p. 67

> *Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened? Though a situation had not been entirely our fault, we tried to disregard the other person involved entirely. Where were we to blame? The inventory was ours, not the other man's.* — BB p. 67 ¶2

Disregard the other person entirely. Before, during, after — what did I do? What do I do to hold on to the resentment, to protect myself and how I look — *I shun, I gossip, I yell?* The Book's words are *our own mistakes*, our wrongs, our faults — never "my part."

In his language → Step Four — the same eight words, all from this one paragraph.

THE FOUR PROMPTS, IN THIS ORDER

then the chain, then the harm

1. **Self-seeking** — look around the whole resentment: what did I do? where was I to blame? *My selfish actions were…*
2. **Selfish** — what was my selfish thinking while I was doing those actions? *My selfish attitudes were…*
3. **Dishonest** — what were the lies I was telling myself that produced that thinking? *I was in the delusion that…*
4. **Afraid** — what are the fears that drive the delusions? *I was afraid…*

The chain: the *fears* drive the *delusions*, that result in the *attitude*, that is behind the *actions* — "Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity" BB p. 62 ¶1. 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 harm I caused? Look around the resentment — parents, friends, employers. *When I am irresponsible for myself, or irresponsible to others, resentment is always the result.*

WORKED

Mr. Brown — the fourth column

The realization — I've flirted and been inappropriate around other men's wives, especially when drinking. I've competed at work for other people's jobs.

- **Self-seeking** — Drank too much at the office party, overreacted to Brown's conversation with my wife. Fought with Brown at the party and punished my wife over the situation. Not doing well at work, missed a lot of days and blame Brown for my job insecurity. Give Brown a hard time at work.
- **Selfish** — No one interferes with my life or tells me how to behave.
- **Dishonest** — I'm in the delusion I had to protect myself from Brown, that he was out to get me.
- **Afraid** — Afraid to lose control of my job, my marriage, my life.
- **Harm** — Harmed Brown by the scene I made at the party; caused him trouble at work. Harmed my wife by my bad behavior. Harmed my employer by my work and my drinking.

Step Four — A Modern One, Start to Finish

#15 My ex-wife — a co-parenting resentment, Columns 3 and 4 closed out (Columns 1 and 2 are on the Column 1 & 2 page)

THE REALIZATION

"How have I done what I resent, to her and to others?"

- I used the kids against her too — badmouthed her to them, used them as messengers, tried to be the "fun parent" to make her look bad.
- I put her in financial hardship when I was drinking — spent money on alcohol, missed work, didn't contribute. She had to carry the family financially for years.
- I controlled things my way during the marriage — my schedule, my plans, my priorities always came first.

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

THE CHAIN

fear → delusion → attitude → action

- **Afraid** — my kids will believe I'm a bad father, that I destroyed the family.
- **Dishonest** — in the delusion that the divorce was entirely her fault and my drinking didn't cause real damage.
- **Selfish** — she has no right to punish me; the system is rigged; the kids should understand.
- **Self-seeking** — badmouthed her to the kids, fought in court out of spite, showed up late, broke promises.

WHERE HAD I BEEN…

the fourth column, in full

- **Self-seeking** — Complained to my kids about their mother. Used my visitation time to interrogate them about what goes on at her house. Refused to pay support on time out of spite; hired a lawyer to fight the increase instead of talking to her directly. Showed up late for custody exchanges, cancelled visits when it was inconvenient, made promises to the kids I didn't keep. Drank during the marriage, came home late, missed their school events, and then acted surprised when she left.
- **Selfish** — She has no right to move on with her life while punishing me for the past. The kids should just understand that adults have problems. The court system is rigged against fathers.
- **Dishonest** — I was in the delusion that the divorce was entirely her fault — that if she had been more understanding, I wouldn't have had to drink so much. I was in the delusion that my drinking didn't affect the kids. I was in the delusion that I can fix this by fighting harder instead of looking at my own behavior.
- **Afraid** — Afraid my kids will grow up believing I didn't love them. Afraid I'll never be more than a weekend father. Afraid that she was right — that I was the one who destroyed the family.

HARM

look around the resentment

- **My children** — exposed them to conflict between their parents; put them in the middle; broke promises; used them as pawns.
- **My ex-wife** — failed to provide financially during the marriage; made co-parenting adversarial instead of cooperative; badmouthed her to the kids.
- **Myself** — the resentment consumed my early recovery; distracted me from the real work; kept me stuck in the victim role.
- **My recovery** — the anger at my ex was the resentment I used most often to justify thoughts of drinking. It was the one I most resisted putting on paper.

Every "afraid" line on this page goes onto the fear list on the next page — with its opposite, where the opposite applies. Companion: *Column 4 quick reference* (twenty-one worked examples).

Step Four — Fear

"We reviewed our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them."

READ P. 67 ¶3 TO P. 68 ¶3 "the evil and corroding thread"

> *This short word somehow touches about every aspect of our lives. It was an evil and corroding thread.* — BB p. 67 ¶3

> *We asked ourselves why we had them. Wasn't it because self-reliance failed us?* — BB p. 68 ¶1

THE DRILL-DOWN — WHY DO I HAVE THIS FEAR?

one list, then smaller lists

Every bracketed fear from the third column and every "afraid" from the fourth goes into **one list**, each fear once. Beside each, the fear underneath it; then the fear under that. Each list gets smaller — 80 becomes 40, 40 becomes 15, 15 becomes 6, 6 becomes 1. A line ends when a fear repeats. *The trail:* not good enough → unwanted → alone → emotional pain → drinking → dying → the unknown → no God → **self-reliance fails me.**

THE FOUR QUESTIONS

for every fear on the list

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 do 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?

WORKED

fear of public speaking

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

WORKED

fear of not being good enough

I FEAR BEING…	WHY?	WHY?	WHY?
not good enough	unwanted	alone	emotional pain → using → dying
not good enough	failure	worthless	~~unwanted~~

1. **Fear of** — not being good enough: as an employee, friend, partner, son, father, person.
2. **Why** — pride, insecurity, self-centeredness, perfectionism, dishonesty. My self-worth is tied to performance and approval; falling short means I have no value.
3. **Self-reliance** — I overachieve to prove my worth, or underachieve to avoid the risk of failing. I seek constant reassurance. I compare myself to everyone and come up short. I people-please to earn approval I don't think I deserve.
4. **Better way** — "We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection." BB p. 60 ¶2 God doesn't require perfection; He requires willingness. My worth comes from Him, not from performance.

"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 · the fear prayer, two asks: *remove my fear · direct my attention to what You would have me be.* "We are in the world to play the role He assigns." BB p. 68 ¶2 Companion: *Fear quick reference*.

Step Four — Sex Conduct

"Now about sex. Many of us needed an overhauling there." — read p. 68 ¶4 to p. 70 ¶2

THE LIST, THEN ONE PAGE PER NAME

"God, please help me see the truth about my conduct in relationships"

Pray, and list every relationship that comes, until he knows the list is done. Then one page per name: **a brief history** — *my motives for getting involved were… · my specific sex conduct was… · the major points that came up in the relationship were… · how it ended, or how it is now…* — and the nine questions below, answered in paragraphs. *Don't share sex conduct at meetings.* Harms go on the harm list as they surface.

THE NINE QUESTIONS

p. 69

> *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

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: parents, kids, brothers, sisters.
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?** — never "I shouldn't have gotten involved"; what he should have done *in* it. Be complete: the Sex Ideal is built from this.

WORKED

"David" — wife, a fifteen-year marriage

History. *Motives:* companionship, someone to build a life with — and to look successful: the house, the family, the picture. Afraid of being alone; she was stable and that felt safe. *Conduct:* emotionally absent for years; used long hours to avoid intimacy; drank heavily in the evenings; critical and impatient; decided finances, plans and holidays alone; let her carry the household and the children. *Major points:* she asked repeatedly for me to be present; I called her needy; she suggested counseling twice and I refused. *Now:* still married, rebuilding.

1. **Selfish** — put my comfort, my career and my drinking ahead of her and the family; treated the marriage as something that should serve me rather than something I needed to serve.
2. **Dishonest** — hid the extent of my drinking ("two or three" when it was six or eight); pretended everything was fine; never admitted I was afraid; told myself I was a good husband because I provided.
3. **Inconsiderate** — major financial decisions without telling her; home late without calling; forgot anniversaries, her birthday, the children's events; didn't ask how her day was; left her to manage everything alone.
4. **Whom did I hurt** — my wife, years of neglect and loneliness; my children, a father present in body only — our oldest developed anxiety; her parents, mine, and the friends who stopped coming around.
5. **Jealousy** — not through infidelity, but through work: she said it felt like I was "married to the office."
6. **Suspicion** — yes: hidden drinking, thin explanations, secretive about money; she stopped trusting my word.
7. **Bitterness** — yes: years of unfulfilled promises. She said, "I didn't sign up for this." She was right.
8. **At fault** — absent, dishonest, dismissive, self-centered; I refused help when it was offered and let alcohol numb me instead of facing what was happening.
9. **Should have done instead** — been honest about my drinking and sought help earlier; been emotionally present; shared decisions, especially money; attended the children's events; accepted her feedback without defensiveness; agreed to counseling; shown appreciation and affection; pulled my weight at home; been vulnerable enough to admit fear; put the marriage and family first.

Harm — stole my wife's peace of mind, her trust, and years of companionship she deserved; stole my children's experience of an engaged father; financial harm through unilateral spending and the hidden cost of drinking; she lost faith in marriage itself because of my conduct.

Step Four — A Sane and Sound Sex Ideal

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

THE BOOK'S TEST, AND ITS PRAYER

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.* — BB p. 69 ¶2

> *In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come, if we want it.* — BB p. 69 ¶3

THE 20-10-5

built from question 9

Review every answer to question 9 across all his inventories — the same qualities keep appearing. List the **top 20** characteristics he hopes to find in a forever partner — twenty *different* traits (faithful and loyal are the same thing). Narrow the 20 to **10** — which could he live without? Narrow the 10 to **5** — the core. Then write the prayer. It runs both directions: what he wants *in* a partner and what he wants *to be* — it is *our* future sex life. Companion: the *Sane & Sound Ideal word bank*.

WORKED

David's 20-10-5, from his question 9

20

Honest	Present	Emotionally available	Faithful	Patient
Appreciative	Responsible	Good communicator	Humble	Supportive
Sober	Spiritual	Affectionate	Hard-working	Financially open
Family-oriented	Vulnerable	Reliable	Forgiving	Kind

10

Honest	Present	Faithful	Patient	Appreciative
Responsible	Good communicator	Sober	Spiritual	Kind

5

Honest	Present	Faithful	Responsible	Kind

> God, help me to be an honest man in all my relationships — honest about who I am, what I'm feeling, and what I'm struggling with. Help me to be present — truly present — with my wife and children, not hiding behind work or substances. Help me to be faithful in every sense: physically, emotionally, and in my attention. Help me to take responsibility for my part in the home, the family, and the marriage — not as a burden, but as a privilege. And help me to be kind — patient when I want to be critical, gentle when I want to be harsh, and grateful when I want to take things for granted. Thy will be done.
>
> — David's sex ideal prayer

> *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.* — BB p. 70 ¶2

ASSIGNMENT

All three inventories on paper — resentments through Column 4, the fear list with its four questions, every relationship with its nine questions and the 20-10-5. "If we have been thorough about our personal inventory, we have written down a lot." BB p. 70 ¶3 Bring all of it, and the Fifth Step date holds.

Steps Five, Six & Seven — Getting Right with God

"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs" — then Six and Seven, the same day

STEP FIVE — THE LONG TALK

Into Action, pp. 72–75

> *This is perhaps difficult—especially discussing our defects with another person. We think we have done well enough in admitting these things to ourselves. There is doubt about that.* — BB p. 72 ¶2

"The best reason first: If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking." BB p. 72 ¶2 · "We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world." BB pp. 73–74 · "We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past." BB p. 75 ¶2

☐ *Are you willing to do this — every twist, every dark cranny, withholding nothing?* yes / no

How the hour runs. He reads his inventory aloud — all of it. You listen: no advice, no judgment. Break the ice with your own twists of character. While he reads, write the list of admitted defects; when he is done, fold it and put it in his Book at page 67, for tonight. Not at meetings; watch out for junkie pride; no names or details given or received — what belongs to a lawyer, a doctor or a therapist goes to them.

THE FIFTH STEP PROMISES, THEN THE QUIET HOUR

p. 75

> *Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator.* — BB p. 75 ¶2

> *Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done. … Is our work solid so far? Are the stones properly in place? Have we skimped on the cement put into the foundation? Have we tried to make mortar without sand?* — BB p. 75 ¶3

☐ *Alone, tonight, with the Book open at page 59: Step One — am I solid?* yes / no

☐ *Step Two — am I solid?* yes / no

☐ *Step Three — say the prayer* yes / no

☐ *Step Four, all of it — am I solid?* yes / no

☐ *Step Five — have I been honest and thorough? Point of no return: last chance to be entirely honest. Omit versus forget — if anything comes up, call me.* yes / no

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

Open the folded list. **Ask** → Do you see how futile, fatal and destructive the fourth column is in your life? · Are you ready to have God remove all of your defects of character — every one?

When I argue for my character defects — congratulations, I get to keep them. Not ready? Pray for willingness, then move to Step Seven. *God drives a garbage truck.*

In his language → Steps Five · Six · Seven

STEP SEVEN

p. 76 — every evening

> 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

Re-do the prayer for **every single defect** on the list, and take your time with God. Then make it daily, filled in: *God, please remove my…* (column 4, from the marked checklist — *my résumé as an untreated addict*) — *God, strengthen my…* (column 5, the opposites — *my job description under God's employment*). **Ask** → Every evening — are you willing to do this?

ASSIGNMENT

Tonight: the quiet hour, Steps Six and Seven. Then go back through all three inventories and build the **Step Eight list** — add the people and institutions you harmed who never made the inventory, *including money owed* — and text it to me. Spiritual hangover: fill up with spiritual things for several days and prepare your heart for amends. Companions: *The Fifth Step* (the defects checklist, pp. 2–3), *The Seventh Step Prayer — A Daily Practice.*

Steps Eight & Nine — Getting Right with Others

"Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all." — "Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

STEP EIGHT — THE LIST

p. 76

> *Now we need more action, without which we find that "Faith without works is dead." Let's look at Steps Eight and Nine. 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.* — BB p. 76 ¶3

☐ *Did you make it when you took inventory?* yes / no

Every harm line from all three inventories, plus the people and institutions who never made the inventory, plus everyone he owes money. The *Twelve and Twelve* calls harm "the result of instincts in collision" — so the subtler ones count: miserly, irresponsible, callous or cold at home; irritable, critical, impatient, humorless; depression and self-pity inflicted on those about us.

Four columns on the list: **now · later · maybe · never…yet.** The list moves left over time; prayer moves it. Guardrails: no amends yet; anything touching a lawyer, an accountant or timing gets flagged, not acted on; their side of the street is not our business. Companion: *Step Eight — The Amends List.*

STEP NINE — THE APPROACH

pp. 76–77

These Steps are to harm no one. "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 — the first vow he signed.

"To some people we need not, and probably should not emphasize the spiritual feature on our first approach. We might prejudice them." BB pp. 76–77 Do not lead with a spiritual approach; communicate a sincere desire to set right the wrong. **The best apology is changed behavior.**

The three excuses the Book names — "It may be he has done us more harm than we have done him" · "we may have acquired a better attitude toward him" · "a person we dislike" — and its answer: "Nevertheless, with a person we dislike, we take the bit in our teeth. It is harder to go to an enemy than to a friend, but we find it much more beneficial to us. We go to him in a helpful and forgiving spirit, confessing our former ill feeling and expressing our regret." BB p. 77 ¶1 Under no condition do we criticize or argue. Their faults are not discussed. We stick to our own.

THE PROCESS

Local · Non-local · Ex's — in that order

1. He marks the list **Local – Non-local – Ex's**. That is the order to write them and do them.
2. He writes each amends out; you go over it together so the language is humble — *sensible, tactful, considerate and humble without being servile or scraping.*
3. **First approach — ask permission.** Never spring an amends on an unsuspecting person.
4. An appointment at *their* convenience. Then in person, direct.
5. *Eat humble pie fresh — the longer it sits, the worse it tastes. Delay means more paperwork, more amends.* The sick-man attitude goes with him: "This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done." BB p. 67

MONEY

p. 78 — take the call, pay your bills

> *Most alcoholics owe money. We do not dodge our creditors. … Arranging the best deal we can we let these people know we are sorry. Our drinking has made us slow to pay. We must lose our fear of creditors no matter how far we have to go, for we are liable to drink if we are afraid to face them.* — BB p. 78 ¶2

The list includes financials owed — family, medical, credit, child support. We are allowed to arrange the best deal we can; the accountant or debt counselor is the properly appointed authority.

CRIMINAL OFFENSES

pp. 78–80 — consent, consult, meditate

"Perhaps we have committed a criminal offense which might land us in jail if it were known to the authorities." BB p. 78 ¶3 "We may lose our position or reputation or face jail, but we are willing. We have to be. We must not shrink at anything." BB p. 79 ¶1 — the second vow.

> *Before taking drastic action which might implicate other people we secure their consent. If we have obtained permission, have consulted with others, asked God to help and the drastic step is indicated we must not shrink.* — BB p. 80 ¶1

Hard on ourselves, considerate of others: we are not allowed to save our own skin at another person's expense. See a lawyer.

Steps Eight & Nine — Getting Right with Others, continued

"Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all." — "Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

DOMESTIC TROUBLES

pp. 80–81

"The chances are that we have domestic troubles." BB p. 80 ¶5 Does she know? Suspect? Not know?

> *If we are sure our wife does not know, should we tell her? Not always, we think. … We feel we ought to say to her that we have no right to involve another person. We are sorry for what we have done and, God willing, it shall not be repeated.* — BB p. 81 ¶1

The *Twelve and Twelve* says it plainly: we cannot unload a detailed account of extramarital adventuring upon an unsuspecting wife or husband. No outsider can appraise such an intimate situation; let God be the final judge.

THE TORNADO

pp. 82–83 — sobriety is not enough

> *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.* — BB p. 82 ¶3

"A remorseful mumbling that we are sorry won't fill the bill at all. We ought to sit down with the family and frankly analyze the past as we now see it, being very careful not to criticize them." BB p. 83 ¶1 Direct amends first, then live the changed behavior — living amends are not a way out of direct ones. The words come first; the behavior convinces them.

WRONGS WE CAN NEVER FULLY RIGHT

p. 83

"Some people cannot be seen—we send them an honest letter. And there may be a valid reason for postponement in some cases. But we don't delay if it can be avoided. We should be sensible, tactful, considerate and humble without being servile or scraping. As God's people we stand on our feet; we don't crawl before anyone." BB p. 83 ¶3 — an honest letter by whatever channel reaches him. Postponement: money to travel, a restraining order, time that has to pass first, ex-lovers.

> *If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.*
>
> — the Ninth Step Promises, BB pp. 83–84

☐ *Do you want this experience in your life?* yes / no

These are internal changes that begin to show halfway through the amends; every Step has its own promises, and these belong to making amends. **The sponsor's role:** we do not micro-manage amends. We give him the Book's guidelines, the outline above, and help him start; the rest is between him and God. Once three or four local amends are done — in a week, hopefully — move on to Step Ten.

In his language → Steps Eight · Nine — *prepare to apologize; now apologize, unless that would make things worse.*

ASSIGNMENT

Read pp. 76–83 and highlight every direction on the amends process. Write out the local amends and bring them. Start Step Ten now: "We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past." BB p. 84 ¶1

Step Ten — Watch · Ask · Discuss · Turn

"Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it." — begun while Step Nine is still going

> *This thought brings us to Step Ten, which suggests we continue to take personal inventory and continue to set right any new mistakes as we go along. We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past. We have entered the world of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness. This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime. Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear. When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them. We discuss them with someone immediately and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others is our code.* — BB p. 84 ¶1

Every clause is a Step he has already taken: *personal inventory* — Four; *ask God at once* — Three and Seven; *discuss with someone* — Five; *make amends quickly* — Eight and Nine; *turn to someone we can help* — Twelve. A process, not an event; a marathon, not a sprint.

In his language → Steps Ten · Eleven — *watch out for it, and be honest when it happens; stay connected.*

THE FOUR ACTION WORDS

in this order

WATCH through the day for the four: selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, fear. When one crops up:

1. **ASK** — pray; ask God to remove it.
2. **DISCUSS** — with someone, immediately — someone who won't co-sign your malady.
3. Make amends quickly, if you harmed anyone.
4. **TURN** — go help someone else.

RADS is the mnemonic for the four — Resentful, Afraid, Dishonest, Selfish; the Book's own order is above, and the nightly review's is *resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid.* Short form: *"Whoops."* Fear is temporary agnosticism — *I don't think God's going to take care of it.* Three sizes of inventory, smallest tool first: brush it off and let it go · pause and pray · pen to paper — the written tenth step, then *copy it, clear it.*

CHECK YOUR MOTIVES

Cameron's two tests

Self-will test — is it dishonest, resentful, selfish or fearful? *One* is enough (column 4). **God's-will test** — is it honest, pure, unselfish and loving? Must be all *four* (column 5).

Am I living in column 4 — self-will, no power — or column 5 — God's will, Power? *Check yourself before you wreck yourself.* Airplanes are off course most of the flight; they arrive because the pilot keeps correcting. Between two people, the Book's own spot-check: "This is getting serious. I'm sorry I got disturbed. Let's talk about it later." BB p. 118

THE PROMISES

pp. 84–85 — the eye of the storm

> *And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone—even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned. We will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame. … We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality—safe and protected. We have not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky nor are we afraid. That is our experience. That is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition.* — BB pp. 84–85

Step Two, fulfilled: the description of a recovered alcoholic.

THE WARNING

p. 85 — a laurel is your own achievement

> *It is easy to let up on the spiritual program of action and rest on our laurels. We are headed for trouble if we do, for alcohol is a subtle foe. We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition.* — BB p. 85 ¶1

Recovered and cured are two different things. If I go back to self-reliance I lose the connection, the insanity returns, and I drink — and with us, to drink is to die. *The liar is in remission — and still out to kill me. Bigshotism will kill me.* Spiritual progress, not spiritual perfection.

ASSIGNMENT

Companion: *Step Ten — Watch · Ask · Discuss · Turn* (RADS, PARS, the written tenth step, the Step 10 Like Us group). Read pp. 84–85. And the packet's note on this Step: **work with others now.**

Step Eleven — Night, Morning, Through the Day

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

"Step Eleven suggests prayer and meditation." BB p. 85 ¶3 Prayer is talking to God; meditation is listening. Three things at three times.

AT NIGHT — THE REVIEW

p. 86

> *When we retire at night, we constructively review our day. Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid? Do we owe an apology? Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another person at once? Were we kind and loving toward all? What could we have done better? Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time? Or were we thinking of what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life? But we must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others. After making our review we ask God's forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken.* — BB p. 86 ¶1

The notebook. A brand-new three-subject spiral notebook; only nightly reviews go in it. Done when he retires at night — each night. The twelve questions below, in this order, numbered, dated. Always end with five to ten gratefuls — that is how the review stays constructive. Then a photo, texted to you, every night: that is the accountability.

How to read them. Questions 1–4 are a mini fourth column: a resentment always carries a selfish thought, a lie he believed, and a fear — and even on a day nothing bothered him there is a selfish thought, a delusion and a fear to write. Only three can honestly be "No": 1, 5 and 6. Five minutes is plenty; forty is self-absorption — reporting the day to a boss, not sitting in judgment.

THE TWELVE QUESTIONS

built on p. 86

1. **Resentful** — did anyone, anything or any situation bother me today?
2. **Selfish** — the self-centered thought attached to that resentment.
3. **Dishonest** — the lie I believe, based on that thought (to others, or to myself).
4. **Afraid** — the fear underneath that delusion.
5. **Apology** — do I owe one; if so, for what?
6. **Secrets** — anything in my conscience I haven't told another person?
7. **Kind and loving** — who I was kind to today, and how.
8. **Done better** — what I could have done better today.
9. **Thinking of self** — what percent of today went to me, my wants, my feelings?
10. **Stream of life** — what I did today that benefits me spiritually.
11. **Corrective measures** — written as a prayer: *God, help me tomorrow to…*
12. **Gratefuls** — five to ten.

ON AWAKENING

pp. 86–87

> *On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives.* — BB p. 86 ¶2

Before the feet hit the floor: the Third Step Prayer, then *"God, this is ___ reporting for duty. What would You have me do?"* Just for today I am going to do God's business — family, job, newcomer, in that order. Read one reading before making the plans (today's are at bigbook.it) and carry one line into the day.

THROUGH THE DAY

pp. 86–88 — PARS

> *As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done."* — BB pp. 87–88

Pause when agitated or doubtful · **A**sk for the right thought or action · **R**emind myself I am no longer running the show · **S**ay "Thy will (not mine) be done." "It works—it really does." BB p. 88 ¶1

The routine: prayers on waking · your sponsor, a meeting and three calls every day · PARS all day · the review and ten to fifteen names at night. *Repetition confirms and strengthens.*

ASSIGNMENT

Morning and evening, every day, by the directions on pp. 85–88. The notebook starts tonight; the photo comes to me every night. Companion: *Step Eleven — The Nightly Review.*

Step Twelve — Carry This Message

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

> *Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. This is our twelfth suggestion: Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail. Remember they are very ill.*
>
> — BB p. 89 ¶1

THE QUESTIONS

p. 89

What is *intensive work* with alcoholics? What are the *other activities*? "Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives." BB p. 89 ¶2 **Ask** → Am I placing myself in frequent contact with newcomers and the fellowship?

Prospects are found at meetings, clubs, rehabs, detox centers, sober-living houses, and through therapists, counselors, doctors and churches. Three parts to the Step: *having had* a spiritual awakening; *carry* this message; *practice* these principles. *There is only one acceptable answer to an AA request, and that is yes.* "I don't have a message to carry." — *"Go there and lie your ass off."* A light switch doesn't ask if you've been to jail or Yale.

WITH A PROSPECT

Working With Others, pp. 90–94

- "Find out all you can about him. If he does not want to stop drinking, don't waste time trying to persuade him. You may spoil a later opportunity." BB p. 90 ¶1
- "His behavior, his problems, his background, the seriousness of his condition, and his religious leanings." BB p. 90 ¶2
- "Don't deal with him when he is very drunk, unless he is ugly and the family needs your help." Then "let his family or a friend ask him if he wants to quit for good and if he would go to any extreme to do so." BB p. 90 ¶3
- "Continue to speak of alcoholism as an illness, a fatal malady." BB p. 92 ¶2 "Be careful not to brand him as an alcoholic. Let him draw his own conclusion." BB p. 92 ¶1
- "He can choose any conception he likes, provided it makes sense to him." BB p. 93 — we are not creating a god; we are choosing a conception.
- "…you had better use everyday language to describe spiritual principles." BB p. 93 ¶1 **In his language** → Step Twelve, and every Step's in *Are You a Bit Fucked?*
- "The more hopeless he feels, the better. He will be more likely to follow your suggestions." BB p. 94 ¶1 Sponsors are not bankers, financial advisors or nurses for sprees: "we simply do not stop drinking so long as we place dependence upon other people ahead of dependence on God." BB p. 98 ¶1

> *Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends—this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it.* — the Twelfth Step promises, BB p. 89 ¶2

THE COMPANION SHEETS

in `recovery/guide/step-12/`; Step Four's in `recovery/guide/step-4/bba/sponsee/`

- **Steps Zero–One** — *First Meeting* (the agreement) · *Cycle of Addiction — My Cycle* · *My Log & Loser List* · *Two Diagrams* · *The Promises, Read Backwards* · *The Mental Obsession* · *Steps One, Two & Three — the Sponsee's Packet* · *Daily Visualizations & Prayers* · *Affirmations*
- **Step Three** — *The Third Step Prayer* · *Step Three — The Abandonment List*
- **Step Four** — *Columns 1 & 2 quick reference* and the *examples packet* · *Column 4 quick reference* · *Fear quick reference* · *Sex quick reference* · the *Sane & Sound Ideal word bank*
- **Steps Five–Nine** — *The Fifth Step* (the defects checklist) · *The Seventh Step Prayer — A Daily Practice* · *Step Eight — The Amends List* · the Step Nine amends guide
- **Steps Ten–Eleven** — *Step Ten — Watch · Ask · Discuss · Turn* · *Step Eleven — The Nightly Review* · bigbook.it for the morning reading
- **The sources this guide consolidates** — *Big Book Sponsorship: The Twelve Step Program* · the *AA 12-Step Packet* · the *Sponsorship Workshop 2024* · *Joe McF's Outline* · *The Foundation Meeting*

Step Twelve — Carry This Message, continued

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

BEGINNING WITH A MAN

pp. 94–96

"It is important for him to realize that your attempt to pass this on to him plays a vital part in your own recovery. Actually, he may be helping you more than you are helping him." BB p. 94 ¶1 Explain how hopeless you once were, how you took the Steps under a sponsor, and that you have recovered.

"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. … We have no monopoly on God; we merely have an approach that worked with us." BB p. 95 ¶4

"Do not be discouraged if your prospect does not respond at once. Search out another alcoholic and try again. … To spend too much time on any one situation is to deny some other alcoholic an opportunity to live and be happy." BB p. 96 ¶1 *I stay sober whether the newcomer stays sober or not.* Create your own hundred.

SOBRIETY IS NOT THE GOAL

pp. 82, 85, 19

> *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'?"* — BB p. 82 ¶3

"Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God's will into all of our activities. 'How can I best serve Thee—Thy will (not mine) be done.'" BB p. 85 ¶1 · "We feel that elimination of our drinking is but a beginning. A much more important demonstration of our principles lies before us in our respective homes, occupations and affairs." BB p. 19 ¶1 Family, job, newcomer — in that order. *Trust God. Clean house. Help others.*

THE INCONVENIENCES, AND THE BELIEF

pp. 97–102

"It may mean the loss of many nights' sleep, great interference with your pleasures, interruptions to your business. It may mean sharing your money and your home." BB p. 97 ¶1 Sometimes they are broke or homeless; sometimes a court, a jail, a rehab, a family. It is for free, and we should be willing to be inconvenienced.

"Burn the idea into the consciousness of every man that he can get well regardless of anyone. The only condition is that he trust in God and clean house." BB p. 98 ¶2 Recovery is not dependent upon people or externals; it depends on his relationship with God.

"Any scheme of combating alcoholism which proposes to shield the sick man from temptation is doomed to failure." BB p. 101 ¶2 Triggers, people, places and things matter early, for a man not yet recovered; once recovered, "Assuming we are spiritually fit, we can do all sorts of things alcoholics are not supposed to do." BB p. 100 ¶4 — "But if you are shaky, you had better work with another alcoholic instead!" BB pp. 101–102

THE FOUNDATION STONE

pp. 97, 132, 162–164

"Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery." BB p. 97 ¶1 The redwoods grow in clusters because their roots are shallow; they root to each other or topple. *If you're not sponsoring, by the implication of the Twelfth Step, you haven't taken the Steps.* Unity, service, recovery — all three sides of the triangle. Be a part of the solution and not a part of the problem; if it isn't in the Big Book, they don't need to be exposed to it.

"We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others." BB p. 132 ¶2 — one starfish at a time. "Thus we grow. And so can you, though you be but one man with this book in your hand." BB pp. 162–163 "Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick." BB p. 164 ¶2

"I can look myself in the black part of my eyes and not want to puke." — Joe McF · Told to wait until you understand the program better? *How well did you like sex before you tried it?* You won't know a thing about recovery until you have taken the Steps, precisely as they were given to us — and then taken somebody through them.

The Prayers of the Program

all of them, in the order the Steps use them — the Book's are cited; the others say whose they are

BEFORE ANYTHING — THE SET-ASIDE PRAYER

Don Pritz, Denver — not the Book's text

> Dear God, please set aside everything I think I know about myself, this book, my disease, these steps, and especially about You, dear God, so that I might have an open mind and a new experience with all these things. Please help me to see the truth.
>
> — before every reading, every meeting, every Step

STEP THREE — EVERY MORNING

p. 63

> 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

STEP FOUR — WHILE WRITING

pp. 67–70

Before each sitting (Big Book Awakening): "God, please help me face and be rid of the things in myself which have been blocking me from You, other people and myself." · "God, please help me see the truth."

> This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done.
>
> — BB p. 67, the resentment prayer

"We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be." BB p. 68 ¶3 · "We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing." BB p. 70 ¶2

STEPS SIX, SEVEN AND NINE

pp. 76, 79

"If we still cling to something we will not let go, we ask God to help us be willing." BB p. 76 ¶1

> 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, every evening

"We ask that we be given strength and direction to do the right thing, no matter what the personal consequences may be." BB p. 79 ¶1

STEPS TEN AND ELEVEN — THE DAY

pp. 85–88

Morning — "we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives" BB p. 86 ¶2; "a prayer that we be shown all through the day what our next step is to be" BB p. 87 ¶1. *"God, this is ___ reporting for duty. What would You have me do?"* — Joe McF

All day — "How can I best serve Thee—Thy will (not mine) be done." BB p. 85 ¶1 · "Thy will be done." BB pp. 87–88

Night — "we ask God's forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken." BB p. 86 ¶1 Then the Seventh Step Prayer, filled in.

STEP TWELVE, AND THE ROUTINE'S PRAYERS

p. 164 · the packet · Joe McF

"Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick." BB p. 164 ¶2

Every night and every morning (the packet): "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."

Walking into a meeting — three chairs, three taps: a prayer for those suffering in the room; for those who have left and not come back; for those who haven't arrived yet. *Before you share or chair:* "Let the voice be mine and the words be Thine." — Joe McF

The Map and the Meetings

where every Step lives in the Book, and what he takes home after each sitting

THE MAP — WHERE EVERY STEP LIVES

the direction, then what follows

#	STEP	THE DIRECTION — THE BOOK'S WORDS	THEN
1	Admitted we were powerless	"fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics" — p. 30 ¶2	the test: "If, when you honestly want to…" — p. 44 ¶1
2	Came to believe	"Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe…" — p. 47 ¶2	"upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built" — p. 47 ¶2
3	Made a decision	"Being convinced, we were at Step Three" — p. 60 ¶7 · "God, I offer myself to Thee" — p. 63 ¶2	"all sorts of remarkable things followed … We were reborn." — p. 63 ¶1
4	Searching and fearless inventory	"we set them on paper" — p. 64 ¶3 · fears — p. 68 ¶1 · conduct — p. 69 ¶1	"we have written down a lot" — p. 70 ¶3
5	Admitted to God, ourselves, another	"We pocket our pride and go to it" — p. 75 ¶2	"we are delighted … Our fears fall from us" — p. 75 ¶2 · "quiet for an hour" — p. 75 ¶3
6	Entirely ready	"Can He now take them all—every one?" — p. 76 ¶1	"we ask God to help us be willing" — p. 76 ¶1
7	Humbly asked	"My Creator, I am now willing…" — p. 76 ¶2	"We have then completed Step Seven." — p. 76 ¶2
8	Made a list	"We made it when we took inventory." — p. 76 ¶3	"we ask until it comes" — p. 76 ¶3
9	Made direct amends	"we go out to our fellows and repair the damage" — p. 76 ¶3 · "we don't crawl before anyone" — p. 83 ¶3	the promises: "amazed before we are halfway through" — p. 83 ¶4
10	Continued to take inventory	"Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear." — p. 84 ¶1	"ceased fighting anything or anyone" — p. 84 ¶2 · "a daily reprieve" — p. 85 ¶1
11	Prayer and meditation	"When we retire at night" — p. 86 ¶1 · "On awakening" — p. 86 ¶2 · "we pause, when agitated or doubtful" — p. 87 ¶3	"It works—it really does." — p. 88 ¶1
12	Carry this message	"intensive work with other alcoholics" — p. 89 ¶1 · "Outline the program of action" — p. 94 ¶1	"Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick." — p. 164 ¶2

THE MEETINGS — WHAT HE TAKES HOME

six assignments, then the routine

SITTING	READ BEFORE	DO BEFORE	BRING
First contact	—	—	himself; a yes or a no in 24 h
1 · Step One	Doctor's Opinion → p. 43 (or the first 63 pages)	Log & Loser List · My Cycle · find the four things	the lists
2 · the abandonment list	pp. 60–63 with his name (3×/day) · pp. 25–29, 55–57	"I need and want God to…" · three things hard to abandon · his fellowship list	the lists; he leaves with the twelve, and calls when ready
3 · Step Three, taken	pp. 60–63 again	meditate on the abandonment list	his call — the prayer is taken on our knees
4 · Step Four check-ins	pp. 64–71	Columns 1 and 2, then 3, then 4; fears; sex; the ideal	each column as it is finished
5 · Step Five	pp. 72–75	the whole inventory, on paper; *that night* the quiet hour, Steps Six and Seven, the Step Eight list	everything, and the date; the list by text
6 · Steps Eight–Nine	pp. 76–83	local amends written out	the written amends
then	pp. 84–88; pp. 89–103	Step Ten now; the nightly notebook; a prospect	the nightly photo — and his first sponsee

Sources — the Big Book Sponsorship Guide (bigbooksponsorship.org, 2024–25) with John's workshop notes from Cameron F. · the Relevant Recovery Sponsorship Workshop packet (2024) · Big Book Awakening Step Four sheets · the AA 12-Step Packet (Joe McF) · the Primary Purpose Group Foundation Meeting · Joe McF with Tim M (2020, transcripts) · Crape et al. 2002. Page references are to Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th edition, verified against the text; the sponsor's lines are the sponsor's, never the Book's. This copy: Three Meetings.