Where Was I to Blame?

Step Four · Column 4 quick reference — the turn from what they did to what I did

You have your list — who, why, and which parts of you got hit. Column 4 turns it around: now we look for **your own mistakes**. It is the hardest column. It is also where the freedom is.

> *"Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes… Where were we to blame? The inventory was ours, not the other man's."*
>
> — How It Works, p. 67

HOW TO DO IT

1. Whisper: *"God please help me see the truth."*
2. Take resentment **#1**. Re-read its Columns 1, 2, and 3 so it's fresh.
3. Is Column 1 a **person**? Do the **Realization** (below). Not a person? Skip it.
4. Answer the **four questions**, in order — flip this sheet over.
5. Write the **Harm** — who got hurt by what I did? (page 3)
6. Move to the next resentment. Stuck? Circle it and keep moving — bring it to your sponsor.

A line or two per question is enough. No essays.
Stuck for ideas? Worked examples start on page 5.

THE RULES OF COLUMN 4

- **Leave the other person out of it.** This is your inventory, not theirs.
- It doesn't matter if it wasn't all your fault. Write **your side only**.
- Look around the whole resentment — **before, during, and after**.
- Count what you did to **hold on to it** — gossip, complaining, the silent treatment.
- Count what you did to **protect yourself and how you look** — I shun, I gossip, I yell.
- Count what you **didn't do** — the call never made, the apology never given.

THE REALIZATION

only when Column 1 is a person

Before you write, hold this question in front of you:

"How have I done the things I've resented in Column 2 to this person — or to others?"

> *"God, this is a sick person like myself. How can I be helpful to them? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done."*
>
> say the prayer every time — then start writing

- Answer in a short paragraph — a few honest lines.
- **Can't see it yet? That's normal.** Go on to the four questions — put it in when it comes.
- An **institution** (a church, a company)? Ask *where have I done what they did?* — skip the "sick person" prayer.
- A **belief or idea**? Skip the Realization.

> *"We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick… they, like ourselves, were sick too."*
>
> — How It Works, pp. 66–67

"God please help me face and be rid of the things in myself which have been blocking me from You, other people and myself."

say this each time before you sit down to write

KEEP THIS SIDE UP WHILE YOU WRITE

The Four Questions

Answer them in this order, every time. Start at the surface (what you did). Dig down to the root (what you were afraid of).

> *"Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened?"*
>
> — How It Works, p. 67 — four words, four questions

1 SELF-SEEKING — what I DID

"My selfish actions were…?"

The things I did. Only actions go here — things a camera could have caught.

LOOK FOR

- What I did **before, during, and after**.
- What I did to **keep it alive** — gossiped, complained, shut them out.
- What I did to **protect me or my image** — I shun, I gossip, I yell.
- What I **should have done and didn't**.

SOUNDS LIKE

- "Drank too much at the party. Fought Brown. Punished my wife. Gave Brown a hard time at work."

WATCH OUT "Nice" moves count too. Loaning money, always saying yes — if I did it to *get* something (to be liked, to dodge a fight), it goes here. Ask: *what was I trying to get?*

2 SELFISH — what I was THINKING

"My selfish attitudes were…?"

The thinking behind the doing. What I wanted — the attitude that made my actions feel okay at the time.

LOOK FOR

- Thinking that sounds like a **rule or a demand**: "No one should…" · "I can do whatever I want." · "They owe me."
- Thinking that felt like **plain common sense** back then.
- Anywhere I felt **justified** — that word is the fingerprint.

SOUNDS LIKE

- "No one interferes with my life or tells me how to behave."

WATCH OUT Not what I did — that's question 1. Question 1 asks *what did I do to get it?* This one asks *what did I want?*

3 DISHONEST — the LIE I told myself

"I was in the delusion that…?"

The lie I believed. A delusion is a story I told myself that felt true — and wasn't.

LOOK FOR

- The belief that made the thinking in question 2 **seem right**.
- Stuck? Ask: *what would I have to believe for that thinking to make sense?*
- It won't feel like a lie. It felt like reality. **That's what makes it a delusion.**

SOUNDS LIKE

- "I was in the delusion I had to protect myself from Brown — that he was out to get me."

WATCH OUT Not lies I told other people — telling lies is an *action* and belongs in question 1. This is the lie I told *me*.

4 AFRAID — the FEAR underneath

"I was afraid…?"

The root. The fear was there first — the lie, the thinking, and the doing all grew out of it.

LOOK FOR

- A fear about **me**, not them — what I might lose, or never get.
- Afraid to **lose** something I have — the job, the marriage, respect.
- Afraid I'll **never get** something I want — love, success, safety.
- Dig with **"then what?"** — "She'll leave" → "I'll be alone" → "no one will ever love me." The bottom answer is the real fear.

SOUNDS LIKE

- "Afraid to lose control of my job, my marriage, my life."

CHECK The fear should explain everything above it. If it doesn't, dig deeper.

WHEN THE FOUR ARE WRITTEN

Read the Chain, Write the Harm

THE CHAIN — HOW THE FOUR FIT TOGETHER

read yours bottom-up when you finish

YOU WRITE IT THIS WAY ↓ | ↑ IT REALLY RUNS THIS WAY

1. **SELF-SEEKING** — the doing — ENDS HERE
2. **SELFISH** — the thinking — ↑
3. **DISHONEST** — the lie — ↑
4. **AFRAID** — the fear (the root) — STARTS HERE

You write from the top — the doing is easiest to see. But the engine runs from the bottom: **the fear drives the lie, the lie makes the thinking, the thinking makes the doing.** When all four are written, read yours from the bottom up and ask: *does the fear explain the rest?* One fear often drives many lies, attitudes, and actions — if your answers repeat across resentments, **you're seeing your pattern.**

> *"Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity, we step on the toes of our fellows and they retaliate."*
>
> — How It Works, p. 62 — the same four, in one sentence

THEN WRITE THE HARM

"Do I see harm that I caused?"

- Look **around** the whole resentment — not just the person in Column 1: family, friends, employer, kids, yourself.
- Name **who** got hurt and **what happened to them**. Plain facts.
- Don't argue with it, don't explain it. Just put it down.

These lines matter later — they grow into your Step 8 amends list.

CHECK THE OPPOSITE OF EACH FEAR

Look at each fear you wrote and flip it. If the opposite is true too, add it to your fear list.

- Afraid of being **alone** — and of being **committed**?
- Afraid of **failing** — and of **succeeding**?
- Afraid of **looking bad** — and of **looking too good**?

> *"We reviewed our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them."*
>
> — How It Works, p. 68

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

One Resentment, Start to Finish

#1 · MR. BROWN

the Big Book's first example · p. 65

Column 1 — resentful at	Mr. Brown
Column 2 — the cause	His attention to my wife. Told my wife of my mistress. Brown may get my job at the office.
Column 3 — affects my	Sex relations · Self-esteem **(fear)** · Security
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.
1 · Self-Seeking (the doing)	Drank too much at the office party and overreacted to Brown talking with my wife. Fought Brown. Punished my wife. Gave Brown a hard time at work.
2 · Selfish (the thinking)	No one interferes with my life or tells me how to behave.
3 · Dishonest (the lie)	In the delusion I had to protect myself from Brown — that he was out to get me.
4 · Afraid (the fear)	Afraid to lose control of my job, my marriage, my life.
Harm	Caused Brown trouble at work. Harmed my wife by my behavior. Harmed my employer by my drinking.

Columns 1–3 are straight from the Big Book's table (p. 65). Read the chain bottom-up: the fear of losing control explains the lie, the thinking, and the doing.

SPONSOR'S TIP — WORK IN PASSES for long lists

- Write questions **1 and 2** — the doing and the thinking — for **every** resentment on your list first.
- Then go back through the whole list and write questions **3 and 4** — the lies and the fears.
- By the second pass, your eyes are tuned to spot fears.

WHEN YOU CAN NAME THE PATTERN

As you write, the same faults keep showing up — controlling, gossip, people-pleasing, self-pity. When you can name one, jot the name in the margin. The **Faults quick reference** shows you how.

> *"When we saw our faults we listed them. We placed them before us in black and white."*
>
> — How It Works, p. 67

When every resentment on your list has its Column 4 written — **stop**. Bring the whole inventory — Columns 1, 2, 3, and 4 — to your sponsor. The next part is reading it together.

Ideas, Not Answers

Same numbering as your Columns 1 & 2 list and your Column 3 sheet. #1 Mr. Brown is on page 4. 1 = the doing · 2 = the thinking · 3 = the lie · 4 = the fear.

#2 · MRS. JONES

person

C1 + C2	A) She's a nut — she snubbed me. B) She committed my friend, her husband, for drinking. C) She's a gossip.
C3 — areas	Personal Relations, Self-Esteem **(Fear)**
Realization	I looked down on her and talked bad about her. I have been judgmental and disgusted by how others live and have voiced it openly.
1 · Self-Seeking	Brought alcohol over to drink with her husband knowing she wanted him to stop. Made fun of her concerns. Didn't care her husband was struggling. I just didn't want to drink alone.
2 · Selfish	I only care about myself, my drinking, and what I want.
3 · Dishonest	She has no right to have an opinion on when and where I drink. She was supposed to put up with my behavior.
4 · Afraid	Afraid I'm incapable of living up to anyone's expectations of me, let alone my own.
Harm	Mrs. Jones — ignored what she wanted, caused her to suffer. Mr. Jones — brought liquor over when he was trying to quit.

#3 · MY EMPLOYER

person

C1 + C2	A) Unreasonable, unjust, overbearing. Threatens to fire me for drinking and padding my expense account.
C3 — areas	Self-Esteem **(Fear)**, Security
Realization	I've been unreasonable, unjust, and overbearing at work too. I've tried to control my employer by setting my own hours. I haven't trusted management. I've threatened to quit when they needed me.
1 · Self-Seeking	Missed too many days from drinking. Sometimes didn't come back from lunch. Took women out to dinner and charged my expense account, lied about what it was for. Bad attitude at work — caused problems for others (Brown).
2 · Selfish	My private life is none of their business. Work owes me.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion I could get what I need by controlling the world around me.
4 · Afraid	Afraid I'll never succeed or amount to anything.
Harm	Lied about my drinking. Stole from expense account. Started a fight at the company party. Caused problems for Brown. Did poor work.

#4 · MY WIFE

person

C1 + C2	A) Misunderstands and nags. Likes Brown. Wants house put in her name.
C3 — areas	Pride, Personal Relations, Sex Relations, Security **(Fear)**
Realization	I misunderstand and complain (nag) at her all the time. I haven't trusted her with a lot of things. I look at other women.
1 · Self-Seeking	Ignore her concerns about my drinking. Procrastinate on what she needs. Embarrass her by drinking around friends. Make her jealous by my attention to other women. Get jealous of her talking to other men (Brown). Cause her insecurity about losing everything.
2 · Selfish	I can do whatever I want and she shouldn't bother me or get in my way.
3 · Dishonest	It's my life and she has no say in it. She's unimportant to me.
4 · Afraid	Afraid she'll see I'm incapable of doing better and will eventually leave me.
Harm	Don't listen to her. Don't make her feel important. Act single in the relationship. Scare her with my drinking. Get jealous easily. My attention to other women.

#5 · SUSIE

person

C1 + C2	A) She didn't respect that I loaned her money or care about paying me back.
C3 — areas	Pocket Book, Personal Relations **(Fear)**
Realization	I have taken money before and not paid it back. I have lied. I've said I could do things I never followed through with.
1 · Self-Seeking	Loaned her money so I didn't have to feel uncomfortable saying no.
2 · Selfish	If I say "no," she'll be angry and hate me.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion that it wasn't okay for me to be honest and stand up for myself.
4 · Afraid	Afraid that if I stand up for myself, she'll reject me.
Harm	My dishonest attitude towards her.

Notice: loaning money *looks* generous. It was self-seeking — he did it to buy comfort. Ask: *what was I trying to get?*

#6 · MY FATHER

person

C1 + C2	A) He loves a woman who tormented me and he talks down to me.
C3 — areas	Self-Esteem, Personal Relations, Sex Relations
Realization	I've been condescending to others. I have humiliated others. I have betrayed my father and others.
1 · Self-Seeking	Acted out to get his attention. Called him names. Got drunk at his house. Told him he was a bad father to my brother and made him cry.
2 · Selfish	My pain is the most important thing in the world and he owes me.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion I could get what I needed by acting out (as a child). That he was capable of putting me first. That if I show him what's wrong with him, he can fix it (as an adult).
4 · Afraid	Afraid I don't matter — that unless I look a certain way, no one will love me.
Harm	Tried to get his attention in ways that were hurtful to him. Called him names.

#7 · MY SISTER

person

C1 + C2	A) Pushes me around, yells at me for the smallest things, picks fights, makes me feel like the loser brother.
C3 — areas	Self-Esteem, Pride, Personal Relations
Realization	I have pushed others around, yelled at people for the smallest things, criticized people in good moods, disrespected people.
1 · Self-Seeking	Ignore her. Shut her out. Lied to her. Gossiped about her. Stolen from her.
2 · Selfish	If she can't talk to me like a normal human, I'll treat her as a stranger. She has no right to interfere with my life.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion that she is not important to me.
4 · Afraid	Afraid I might do something wrong — relapse, hurt her, hurt myself to make her feel sorry. Afraid her opinion of me — that I'm too defective to be loved — is true.
Harm	Stole from her — money and peace of mind. Took it out on co-workers. Shut her out.

#8 · MY MOTHER

person

C1 + C2	A) Never satisfied — always criticized me, compared me to my siblings. B) Ignored what was happening in the house and pretended everything was fine. C) Guilt-trips me when I set a boundary.
C3 — areas	Self-Esteem, Personal Relations **(Fear)**
Realization	I have been critical and unsatisfied with others. I have ignored problems in my own relationships and pretended everything was fine, especially when I was drinking. I have guilt-tripped people who set boundaries with me.
1 · Self-Seeking	Cut her off for months, then showed up when I needed something. Used my drinking as a weapon — "you made me this way." Screamed at her, called her names. Refused to visit, then complained she didn't understand me. Took money from her while resenting her.
2 · Selfish	She owes me the childhood I didn't have. She should have been stronger. If she can't give me what I need, she's useless to me.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion she was capable of being a different person. That the way she raised me is the only reason I am the way I am. That staying angry was the same as protecting myself.
4 · Afraid	Afraid she was right — that I'm too sensitive, too much, not enough. Afraid forgiving her means what happened was okay. Afraid I've become her.
Harm	Was cruel to her, cut her off, used her failures as a weapon, took money while telling her she was worthless. Put my partners in the middle. Created division in the family.

#9 · MY EX-WIFE

person

C1 + C2	A) Uses the kids against me. B) Took me to court for more child support. C) Won't let me have the kids on holidays unless I do things her way.
C3 — areas	Pride, Personal Relations, Security, Pocket Book **(Fear)**
Realization	I used the kids against her too — badmouthed her to them, used them as messengers, tried to be the "fun parent." I put her in financial hardship when I was drinking. I controlled things during the marriage.
1 · Self-Seeking	Complained to my kids about their mother. Refused to pay support on time out of spite. Showed up late for custody exchanges. Cancelled visits when inconvenient. Made promises to the kids I didn't keep. Missed school events drinking.
2 · Selfish	She has no right to move on with her life while punishing me. The kids should just understand. The court system is rigged against fathers.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion the divorce was entirely her fault. That my drinking didn't affect the kids. That I can fix this by fighting harder instead of looking at my own behavior.
4 · Afraid	Afraid my kids will grow up thinking I didn't love them. Afraid I'll never be more than a weekend father. Afraid she was right — that I destroyed the family.
Harm	My children — exposed them to conflict, broke promises, used them as pawns. My ex-wife — failed to provide, made co-parenting adversarial. Myself — the resentment consumed my early recovery.

#10 · MY SPONSOR

person

C1 + C2	A) Told me I wasn't "working the Steps right" and dropped me after I missed a few calls. B) Shared something I told him in confidence. C) Always has time for newer sponsees but makes me feel like an afterthought.
C3 — areas	Self-Esteem, Pride, Personal Relations
Realization	I've told people they weren't doing things right — at work, in relationships, even in recovery. I've shared other people's personal information. I've dropped people when they became inconvenient.
1 · Self-Seeking	Didn't call my sponsor for weeks, then got angry when he wasn't available. Didn't do the assignments. Talked about him behind his back. Went looking for an "easier" sponsor. Used his failings as an excuse to not work the Steps.
2 · Selfish	He owes me his time. A "good" sponsor would be more patient. If recovery people can't be trusted, maybe the program doesn't work.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion my sponsor dropped me "for no reason" — when the truth is I wasn't showing up. That I wanted a sponsor when I really wanted comfort.
4 · Afraid	Afraid he was right — that I'm not working the program and I'm going to drink. Afraid I'm the common denominator.
Harm	Disrespected his time. Gossiped about him to other members. Created division in the fellowship. Nearly left the program over a resentment I refused to put on paper.

#11 · THE CHURCH

institution · modified Realization

C1 + C2	A) Told me I was sinful and going to hell. B) Covered up abuse scandals. C) Controlled my family with guilt and fear. D) Took money my family couldn't afford.
C3 — areas	Self-Esteem, Personal Relations, Security, Pocket Book
Realization (modified)	I have used shame and guilt to control others — my children, my spouse. I have covered up my own wrongs to protect my image. I have taken from others when I couldn't afford to give back. I have judged others harshly.
1 · Self-Seeking	Used the church's failings as an excuse to reject all spirituality. Argued about religion at family gatherings. Made sweeping judgments about all religious people. Refused to examine my own spiritual life.
2 · Selfish	All organized religion is corrupt. I'm smarter than people who believe. No one tells me what to do spiritually.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion that because the institution was wrong, I didn't have to look at my own spiritual condition. That my bitterness was protecting me, when it was blocking me from God.
4 · Afraid	Afraid the church was right about me — that I am bad, beyond redemption. Afraid that if I open up spiritually, I'll be controlled or deceived again.
Harm	Family — caused division, dismissed their faith. My children — denied them any spiritual foundation. Myself — the resentment blocked me from finding a Higher Power.

Institutions: no "sick person" prayer. Instead pray: *"God, help me see where I have done the same things this institution has done to me. Help me see my own mistakes. Thy will be done."*

#12 · THE COMPANY

institution · modified Realization

C1 + C2	A) Laid me off after 12 years with no warning. B) Promoted younger, less experienced people over me. C) Toxic culture — long hours expected, no recognition.
C3 — areas	Self-Esteem, Pride, Ambition, Security, Pocket Book **(Fear)**
Realization (modified)	I have let people go from my life without warning — friendships, relationships. I have created toxic environments at home. I have discarded people when they were no longer useful to me. I have taken credit for others' work.
1 · Self-Seeking	Coasted in the later years. Stopped developing new skills. Complained to coworkers instead of talking to management. Drank heavily after work. Padded expenses. After the layoff, badmouthed the company to anyone who would listen.
2 · Selfish	They owe me for my years of service. I shouldn't have to prove myself. The younger people don't know what they're doing.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion that showing up for 12 years entitled me to job security regardless of my performance. That I was still performing well when I had been coasting.
4 · Afraid	Afraid I'm past my prime. Afraid I'll never find work again. Afraid that without the title, I'm nobody.
Harm	Coworkers — negativity hurt team morale. Family — drinking and financial stress fell on them. Employer — coasting and padded expenses were theft.

#13 · GOD DOES NOT CARE ABOUT ME

principle · no Realization

C1 + C2	A) If God cared, He wouldn't have let people abuse me. B) God ignores me. C) God doesn't protect me.
C3 — areas	Self-Esteem, Security, Personal Relations **(Fear)**
Realization	*Skipped — Column 1 is not a person.*
1 · Self-Seeking	Guard and protect myself. Not vulnerable. Attack first. Use humor to control situations. Use sarcasm as my weapon of choice.
2 · Selfish	Keep a closed mind. I am the most important person here. Do whatever is necessary to keep you out. No one has my back except me.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion I don't need anyone. That God can't be trusted.
4 · Afraid	Afraid that if there is a God, He will never love me. Afraid I can't be fixed.
Harm	I hate myself for not having answers and being weak. Have not been open-minded to the possibility that God exists and wants a relationship with me.

Beliefs and ideas: skip the Realization — go straight to the four questions.

#14 · I'LL NEVER BE FULFILLED IF I AM NOT IN A RELATIONSHIP

principle · no Realization

C1 + C2	A) They always leave me. It will never work out for me. I can't stand to be alone.
C3 — areas	Self-Esteem, Personal Relations, Sex Relations **(Fear)**
Realization	*Skipped — Column 1 is not a person.*
1 · Self-Seeking	Put on an "act" to attract. Be a chameleon — say whatever is needed to get them. Overpower and intimidate. Fake listening. Never let go.
2 · Selfish	If I get my needs met first, then I'll be able to care about you. They should know what I want without me having to say it.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion a relationship will fix me. That they are the problem. That relationships are about getting, not giving.
4 · Afraid	If I am alone too long, I'll die inside spiritually.
Harm	Trampled on others to get my needs met. Sucked the life out of partners.

#15 · I AM UNLOVEABLE

principle · no Realization

C1 + C2	A) Too many people have rejected me and failed me. I am disposable, irrelevant and defective.
C3 — areas	Self-Esteem, Personal Relations **(Fear)**
Realization	*Skipped — Column 1 is not a person.*
1 · Self-Seeking	I'll be anything and do anything to be loved. Adopt others' values, opinions, and beliefs. Manipulate to get affection and recognition. Clingy and needy. Won't let go.
2 · Selfish	My needs are more important than your needs. Boundaries don't exist for me.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion that becoming whatever I need to be loved won't have consequences. Don't tell the truth, may not even know the truth.
4 · Afraid	Afraid I'll never be loved and will always be alone.
Harm	Harmed a lot of people. Never accepted myself just as I am.

#16 · I'LL NEVER BE OK UNLESS I HAVE A LOT OF MONEY

principle · no Realization

C1 + C2	A) It takes money to be happy. It takes money to have security, friends, and successful relationships.
C3 — areas	Security, Pocket Book, Personal Relations **(Fear)**
Realization	*Skipped — Column 1 is not a person.*
1 · Self-Seeking	Manipulate, lie, play favorites, use people to get ahead, take shortcuts, take undeserved credit, only hang with rich and successful people.
2 · Selfish	Sacrifice anyone and anything to get to the next level. Look down on those with less. Look up to those with more. Everyone cheats to get ahead — it's not a big deal.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion I can live behind a mask and persona without consequences. That I control money, when money controls me.
4 · Afraid	Even with money, I am still unhappy. I am a nobody and will always be a nobody.
Harm	Lots of people. Everyone I lied to and stepped over to get ahead.

#17 · EVERYONE ON SOCIAL MEDIA HAS A BETTER LIFE THAN ME

principle · no Realization

C1 + C2	A) People I went to school with are posting promotions, vacations, happy families — and I'm in a sober house. B) My ex posted with someone new and everyone congratulated them.
C3 — areas	Self-Esteem, Pride, Ambition
Realization	*Skipped — Column 1 is not a person.*
1 · Self-Seeking	Spent hours scrolling instead of working my program. Posted carefully curated content to project an image. Stalked my ex's profile instead of doing Step work. Isolated and refused to go to meetings out of shame.
2 · Selfish	I deserve what they have. Life gave them advantages it didn't give me. Recovery doesn't count as a real accomplishment.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion that social media is real life. That other people's success means my failure. That I should be "further along" by now.
4 · Afraid	Afraid I've permanently fallen behind. Afraid people see me as the cautionary tale. Afraid recovery will always feel like starting over.
Harm	Myself — hours consumed by comparison, delayed recovery work. Sponsor and recovery community — withdrew from fellowship. People I judged online.

#18 · MY ROOMMATE IN SOBER LIVING

person

C1 + C2	A) Eats my food and never pays me back. B) Leaves the place a mess and I get blamed at house meeting. C) Told the house manager I broke curfew.
C3 — areas	Security **(Fear)**, Pocket Book, Personal Relations, Self-Esteem
Realization	I've taken things that weren't mine and called it "borrowing." I've left my mess for other people to clean up — at home and in life. I've told on people to get the heat off me.
1 · Self-Seeking	Ate his food to get even. Gossiped about him to the other guys in the house. Gave him the silent treatment. Slammed doors instead of talking. Kept score instead of asking for what I needed.
2 · Selfish	He should follow the rules so my life is easy. I shouldn't have to say anything — he should just know.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion that staying quiet was keeping the peace. That getting even quietly isn't as bad as saying it out loud.
4 · Afraid	Afraid that if I speak up, I'll lose my spot in the house — that conflict always ends with me getting thrown out.
Harm	The whole house — my gossip split it into sides. My roommate — never gave him a straight chance to fix it. Myself — stewed for weeks instead of working my program.

#19 · MY PROBATION OFFICER

person

C1 + C2	A) Treats me like I'm still using no matter what I do. B) Drug tests me at the worst times and makes me miss work. C) One mistake and she can take my freedom.
C3 — areas	Security **(Fear)**, Self-Esteem, Ambition
Realization	I've treated people like their past was all they were. I've assumed the worst about people and watched for them to fail. I've held power over people and made them feel small.
1 · Self-Seeking	Showed up late with an attitude. Lied about small stuff that didn't even matter. Complained about her to everyone. Did the bare minimum and called it compliance.
2 · Selfish	I already did the hard part by getting sober — she should get off my back. The rules are for real criminals, not me.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion that she's out to get me — that being watched is the same as being attacked. That I deserve trust I haven't rebuilt yet.
4 · Afraid	Afraid I'll never stop paying for my past. Afraid that no matter how good I get, I'm one bad day from losing everything.
Harm	Myself — my attitude made every check-in harder. My family — they hold their breath every time I see her. My boss — the lies about why I missed work.

#20 · THE TREATMENT CENTER

institution · modified Realization

C1 + C2	A) Took my family's money and discharged me at 28 days, fixed or not. B) Staff talked down to us. C) Promised aftercare that never happened.
C3 — areas	Security, Pocket Book, Self-Esteem, Personal Relations
Realization (modified)	I have taken money for things I didn't finish. I have talked down to people I was supposed to help. I have made promises — to my family most of all — and not kept them.
1 · Self-Seeking	Used "treatment didn't work" as my excuse to keep using. Told my family the program failed me so they'd stop pushing meetings. Refused to try the parts that were free — meetings, sponsors, step work.
2 · Selfish	If they couldn't fix me, no one can — so why should I try. Recovery is their job, not mine.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion that recovery is something you buy — that someone else could do my work for me. That because part of it was wrong, all of it was worthless.
4 · Afraid	Afraid that nothing can fix me — that even the professionals gave up on me. Afraid my family wasted their money on someone not worth it.
Harm	My family — spent their money, then I blamed everyone but me. Myself — used the resentment as a ticket back out. People I told my story to — talked them out of getting help.

#21 · I CAN'T HAVE FUN SOBER

principle · no Realization

C1 + C2	A) Everything fun in my life had a drink or a drug in it. B) Sober people seem boring. C) The party moved on without me.
C3 — areas	Self-Esteem, Personal Relations, Ambition **(Fear)**
Realization	*Skipped — Column 1 is not a person.*
1 · Self-Seeking	Sat home scrolling old photos instead of trying anything new. Turned down invites from sober people, then complained I was lonely. Told the "good times" stories to newer guys. Kept my old dealer's number "just in case."
2 · Selfish	If it's not a party, it's a waste of my time. Fun should come to me without effort or risk.
3 · Dishonest	In the delusion that the party years were all fun — forgetting the mornings, the money, the shame. That fun is a thing that happens to you, not a thing you build.
4 · Afraid	Afraid that sober life is just gray waiting. Afraid the best part of my life is already over.
Harm	Myself — kept one foot out the door of my own recovery. New guys — my war stories glamorized the thing that was killing us. Sober friends — wrote them off before giving them a chance.

These are examples — ideas, not answers. Your own will be different. **What matters is that they are honest for you.**