A Sane and Sound Sex Ideal — Instructions

> *"In this way we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life."*
>
> *(◆ BB p.69)*

Overview

After completing the Sex Inventory, we move on to our Sane & Sound Sex Ideal assignment. This exercise helps us move from examining past conduct to shaping future conduct. It uses the **20-10-5 format** — a narrowing process that forces us to identify what truly matters most.

(The 20-10-5 format is from the Big Book Awakening Sponsorship Workshop. Many other interpretations of this exercise can be found in AA.)

Connection to Question #9

The Sex Ideal draws directly from your answers to **Question #9** ("What should I have done instead?") across all of your sex inventory entries. Those answers describe the conduct and character traits you wish you had brought to your relationships. The Sex Ideal distills these into a forward-looking vision.

Before starting, review all of your Question #9 answers. Notice the patterns — the same qualities will likely appear across multiple relationships.

The 20-10-5 Format

Step 1 — List 20

List your **TOP 20 characteristics** that you hope to find in your forever, ideal mate/partner.

Important: Do not list things that are synonymous of each other. Faithful and loyal are the same thing. Honest and truthful are the same thing. List 20 *different* characteristics or traits that are most important to you.

Think about:

- Character traits (honest, patient, kind)
- Values (spiritual, family-oriented, hard-working)
- Relational qualities (good communicator, supportive, faithful)
- Practical qualities (financially responsible, reliable, sober/supportive of sobriety)

If you know the quality but can't find the word for it, see the Sane & Sound Ideal Word Bank — 34 character clusters plus word banks for 15 relationship roles (partner, son/daughter, father/mother, employer, employee, sponsor, sponsee, and more). The words there are grouped by meaning, so taking one word per group keeps the no-synonyms rule automatically.

Step 2 — Narrow to 10

From your 20, choose the **10 most important**. Which would you be willing to live without, and which are non-negotiable? Cross out the 10 that matter less.

Step 3 — Narrow to 5

From your 10, choose the **5 most important**. These are your core — the traits without which a relationship cannot work for you.

Prayer

After completing the 20-10-5, write a brief prayer or reflection incorporating your top 5 (and any others from your list that matter deeply). This prayer is your Sex Ideal — a statement to God of how you want to conduct yourself and what you seek in partnership.

See Sexual Ideal Examples for two examples of this prayer.

Guidance

- **Be honest, not aspirational.** The ideal should reflect what you genuinely need, not what sounds impressive.
- **Avoid synonyms.** Each of the 20 should be distinct. If two words mean the same thing to you, pick one.
- **Consider both directions.** What do you want *in a partner*, and what do you want *to be* as a partner? The BB says "we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for *our* future sex life" — it's about our conduct too.
- **Let Question #9 guide you.** Your answers to "what should I have done instead" across all relationships reveal the qualities you already know matter.

Beyond the Sex Ideal — Other Roles

The 20-10-5 works on any relationship, not just partnership. Steps Eight and Nine extend the same question to every role we occupy — son, daughter, father, mother, employer, employee, sponsor, friend. The Word Bank carries a bank per role and a multi-role sweep worksheet; the Step Eight framing is in sane and sound ideal.

Worksheet

> *"God, please help me shape a sane and sound ideal for my future sex life."*
>
> *(ref.* ◆ BB p.69*)*

20

1. _____	2. _____	3. _____	4. _____	5. _____
6. _____	7. _____	8. _____	9. _____	10. _____
11. _____	12. _____	13. _____	14. _____	15. _____
16. _____	17. _____	18. _____	19. _____	20. _____

10

1. _____	2. _____	3. _____	4. _____	5. _____
6. _____	7. _____	8. _____	9. _____	10. _____

5

1. _____	2. _____	3. _____	4. _____	5. _____

My Sex Ideal Prayer

Source: 20-10-5 format from the Big Book Awakening Sponsorship Workshop. BB citation: p.69 "In this way we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life."

From the Big Book Awakening Step Four guide at bigbook.it/step-4/ · a page of the guide, not the workbook itself: the workbook's own pages are linked from "Originals & sources." · source 06-sex-ideal.md