

Continue







## Fourth step worksheet

The fourth step is very special in the 12-step program. In previous steps, we have admitted our problems and handed our lives to the God of our understanding, our Higher Power. We are told to make "a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves." Sober Speak provides two step 4 inventory worksheets for writing your moral inventory. The fourth step inventory worksheets are a comprehensive and must be completed without holding anything back. They are an honest look at ourselves; from this, we gain a new perspective on who we are and what we need to work on. They also allow us to explore all our character defects. To be effective, an inventory process must be marked by rigorous honesty. We expose ourselves to ourselves with all our negative feelings and character flaws and do that fearlessly. This step aims to set us on the path to emotional sobriety. The other alternative is being a so-called "dry drunk," which is someone sober but whose attitudes and actions remain those of their drinking past. In the fifth step, we will become willing to have God take all of this away and ask for that in the sixth. In the eighth, we made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all. When we finish the ninth, we have made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. This shows how fundamental the fourth step is to the steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. Here is a brief fourth-step worksheet guide using the four charts in the Sober Speak Step 4 worksheets. Each chart contains a brief introduction, an example and details the idea behind each column. The Big Book says that resentment is the "number one" offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease. Resentment creates dangerous negative thoughts. They fester like a sore and erupt as anger, bitterness, or melancholy. They are more likely than anything else to cause a relapse. Here, we name a resentment. It does not have to be one word. It could be "Not having the final word." The next column is: This can be anything—a person, an organization, or a company. Think deeply about this. Some objects of resentment are surprising and very unpleasant to admit to, like resenting our children for forcing too much responsibility on us. The next column is: There are so many reasons we can resent things; many will touch on the fears we deal with later. The next column is: Resentments are expressed in attitudes and actions. We make the effect clear. Often, an effect will trigger a memory of harm that we can list. It is safe to say that these four charts do not exist in isolation but feed into each other. The way fear affects us is described as follows: This short word somehow touches on every aspect of our lives. It was an evil and corroding thread; the fabric of our existence was shot through with it. What Do I Fear?Why do I fear it?What Effect Does It Have on Me?How Does it Affect Others?Being aloneBecause it makes me feel as though I have no value.I become morose and demand attention.They try to avoid me which reinforces the loneliness.They become resentful. As alcoholics, fear was a constant companion. Many AA members began their path to addiction by drinking to dispel fear. Here we list each fear we have. This column states the underlying cause or causes of the fear. The next column is: What does this fear do to us? How do we react to it? How does it affect our daily living? The next column is: We are not the only ones affected by our responses to things. The way we respond to our fears affects others as well. Here we state how others react to the effect it has on us. In the example, the reaction to the way the recovering addict used to become depressed ensured that others steered clear of them. We are told that we must be willing to make amends where we have harmed, provided that we do not cause further harm. This part of the fourth step inventory will be used in the eighth step: "Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all." In the 9th, we make direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when doing so would injure them or others. Dealing with these harms is vital to our spiritual growth and to achieving ongoing sobriety. What Harm Did I Do?Who Did I Harm?Why Did I Do This?What Defect Made Me Do It?Lied about my drinkingMy family, My friends did this to "protect" myself.Selfishness because I wanted to carry on drinking.Pride and not wanting to admit to a problem. This may be the hardest part of this step. Here we list memories of people we have hurt. The next column is: This can range even to what we hurt if we injure an animal. Generally, though, this refers to people, and some people will appear on this list many times and often for different reasons. The next column is: Something spurs us to harm. This is the immediate fight-or-flight response we are noting here. The next column is: This is the deeper level of "Why Did I Do This?" What triggered the negative feelings that caused us to harm another? Each harm stems in some way from negative thoughts. The Big Book tells us to evaluate our sexual activity in this way "We subjected each relation to this test - was it selfish or not?" The sex conduct worksheet deals with matters that society considers too intimate to discuss. The Big Book responds by establishing that "we treat sex as we would any other problem." With Whom?What Happened?How Did We Hurt If We Did?Who Was Hurt?What Defect(s) Affected This?I don't know her name.One night stand after drinking.I bragged to my wife afterward.By being vengefulMy sex partner and my wife.Anger at my wife for commenting about my performance when I was drunk. Insecurity about being adequate Who else was involved in the encounter? Not all the sordid parts, but an overview of how the event transpired. The next column is: Not all sexual encounters were necessarily bad, but if we did hurt someone, we need to state the harm we did. The next column is: List the names of the people who were harmed. This might include yourself more often than you realize. The next column is: W/ve didn't harm people for no reason. So, what underlying flaw prompted this action? Step 4 can take a long time. Do not let that put you off. This personal inventory step can be challenging. Focus on the words of the 9th step promises: We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. With each step we take, we can recall this part of a program and a process working toward a spiritual awakening. Steps are related; the fourth step is one part of a sum of critical parts working to improve ourselves. We will revisit this process of assessing how we wronged others daily for the rest of our lives. In this way, the fourth step inventory is like a training event that is harder than the final event. Do not treat it as a sprint and miss things. And do not treat it as a marathon because when it is long, we balk at continuing. The Big Book puts what we have achieved by completing this step very plainly when it says: you have swallowed and digested some big chunks of truth about yourself. At the end of the day, though, we have already started to be honest with ourselves when, back at step one, we admitted we were powerless over alcohol. That was the scariest step of all. Edited on June 1, 2022 These are the original Fourth Step Guides and Work sheets used in the Dallas B., AA Big Book Study, the 4th Step Workshops, and the 12 Step Study Workshops. If you get these 4th Step Worksheets and Guides else — they are not the originals and may have been changed or altered. These Guides and Worksheets have been used by thousands of AA's, NA's, Al-Anon's, OA Overeaters's, CA's, GA's and other 12 Step Recovery Program Members that use the 12 Steps as instructed in the book, Alcoholics Anonymous. Get the most out of these A.A. 4th Step Work sheet by taking time to read the INSTRUCTIONS that go with them. Included as a download file, below. There is a difference in an 'AWAKENING' and an 'Understanding.'" The 12 Steps are about having a 'Spiritual Awakening' as the result of having 'taken' these 12 Steps. WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? Knowing, Understanding, and Experiencing are NOT the same. We're fooling ourselves when we think we can understand psychic or spiritual experiences and psychological transformations - BEFORE we've experienced them. UNDERSTANDING comes later — after we've had the experience produced by 'taking' the 12 Steps. For now, take the actions — and see what happens AFTER we have our AWAKENING experience in Step 12. The purpose of taking the 12 Steps — is so that you can experience being comfortable — while sober! Step 4: "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves." NOTE: Scroll down this page for the links to the 5 worksheets that you can download. (About the middle of this page). Click or touch the links and they will open and then save or print a copy. There is much more to sobriety than just being physically sober. There is more to sobriety than having the obsession for alcohol removed. Sober isn't much fun - unless we can find a way to be happy and thriving while sober. And that's what taking the 12 Steps will do for you. To be happy WHILE sober requires emotional sobriety. The Fourth Step is an action step towards PHYSICAL and EMOTIONAL sobriety. We are in a process with the 12 Steps that will transform our thoughts, our attitudes, and move us towards recreating our lives. In Step 3, We made a decision to give up our old plans for living and to try A.A.'s 12 Step Plan for Living. Step Four is a fact-finding and fact-facing process. We are searching for the "causes and conditions" that produced our miserable results in life! We want to discover the attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, fears, actions, behaviors, and the patterns - that have been blocking us, causing us problems and causing our failure. We want to learn the exact nature of our "character defects" and what causes us to do the unacceptable things we do - so that once they are removed, we can acquire and live with new attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, actions and behaviors for our HIGHEST good, and for the HIGHEST good of those with whom we come in contact. This prepares us to live a life of purpose - where we can be in maximum fit condition to be of service to others. Everything contained in the Fourth Step Inventory Worksheets is distilled directly from the book - Alcoholics Anonymous. NEW! Be sure to download ALL SIX WORKSHEETS below: The first one is the 4th Step Guide Instructions page. Read the instructions page first. If you have questions contact Dallas B. here, on this website's contact form — and we will be sure that he gets it! You can also contact Dallas B., on Facebook by visiting the Step12.com page on Facebook, until we restore our forums on this website. 1 The 4th Step Guide Instructions 4th-step-instructions-xDownload 2. The 4th Step - Resentments worksheet. 4th-step-resentments-xDownload 3. The 4th Step - Fear's worksheet 4. The4th Step - Sex Conduct Worksheet. 4th-step-sex-conduct-xDownload 5. The 4th Step Inventory - Harms to Others Worksheet NEW: We've decided to include this page as Download Number Six - which will include links in the PDF files to make it easier for you to access them in the future, and easier for you to pass them on to others - if you desire to do so. 6. This page with links to all the forms, too There is a detailed instruction sheet that goes with the Step 4 inventory forms, from the workshop. Please read that instruction sheet, follow the instructions, and read all the references in the Big Book mentioned in the instructions, and read the Big Book references on each one of the individual forms. If someone offers you one that you can type your 4th Step inventory in it — RUN AWAY AS FAST AS YOU CAN! The Big Book SPECIFICALLY instructs us use pen and paper to do this! (There is a huge psychological reason for 'hand writing' rather than 'typing') . NOTE: Is this official A.A. Literature? What is more OFFICIAL — than The Book, Alcoholics Anonymous? If you have questions or need additional help — contact us here at Step12.com How many times have we watched someone we cared about sit on their 4th step inventory, only to relapse a short time into it? I for one grew sick of watching this while feeling like there was nothing I could do.Sometime in my first couple weeks of recovery, I heard a message from a circuit speaker named "Chris R" that talked about doing the steps rapidly, having the spiritual awakening necessary to gain conscious contact with God, and getting on with our new life in recovery - happy joyous and free.This article is a breakdown of some of the history of the twelve steps, a simplified way to look at the 4th step, and a call to support each other in getting through the steps to increase our odds of long term recovery.Before the 12 steps were founded, there really was no hope for people to recover from drug addiction and alcoholism. People were dumbfounded why they could not drink normally or quit altogether. Such people were losing everything in life (much like you and I have) but without real treatment for addictive behavior to drugs and alcohol.Then, a new dawn arose when Bill Wilson took what he learned from The Oxford Groups of the time and got a proctologist named Dr. Bob Smith to do the work with him. This communion was taken prior to a Big Book being written, prior to AA (Alcoholics Anonymous), and prior to people whining about doing their inventory in meetings.After a while of drinking on and off, failing to stay sober for long, and one extremely embarrassing trip to a doctor conference where he drank so much he didn't remember the travel, Dr. Bob Smith got sick of the way he was living, decided to get rigorously honest, and while Bill W and Anne Smith (Bob's wife) waited anxiously to hear news of where he was, Dr. Bob went out and did the twelve steps in a day, came home to his wife and best friend, and never drank again.Bill D or The Man In The Bed from the now famous AA #3 picture, entered into the Akron City Hospital for his last detox on June 26th, 1935. Two days later, Bill W and Dr. Bob walked into his hospital room and shared their idea about the disease of alcoholism and the way they had found personal success in defeating their drink problem.Bill D did the first three steps right there, gave his life over to his higher power (all three of AA's first three members were Christians), and began a searching and fearless moral inventory with the founders. It was less than a week that he was doing his amends and out looking for more people to help with the message. Bill D never drank again until his death on September 17, 1954.Reading into the history of the 12 steps and the founding members of all the fellowships that you and I qualify for. I have found one thing that has changed over the course of history from the message it used to be to the message it is now: the steps are THE solution and working them every day keeps us connected to God and recovered; not meetings and relying on a sponsor to help you f f f f eeeeee better.If you are truly as alcoholic or addict as I am, working step four quickly (two weeks or less) to completion, then sharing it with a sponsor or trusted spiritual advisor, is likely the difference between you recovering from this disease or living a life where you feel ashamed, full of fear, and trapped in negative emotions unable to ever stop drinking and drugging.When you identify negative thoughts and the patterns in which they are created in your head, you are finding your own character defects that are halting you from spiritual growth and continuing to drive you towards drugs and alcohol.With rigorous honesty to yourself in this process, laying everything on paper without keeping secrets from your spiritual advisor or sponsor, your fourth step inventory will become a place for you to discover the truth about your behavior. Spoiler alert: your drinking and drugging is not the cause of your behavior.When we list memories from our past in the 4th step and look at them alongside our current behaviors, God begins to show us where our deepest anger, resentment, feelings of inadequacy, and everywhere else we are struggling truly come from so we can have God remove them on a daily basis and live better lives during the recovery process while staying in contact with Him.At this point of our step work we have finished the first three steps and have made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. It is important while doing the 4th step to remember one thing, you are on the 4th step. You are not making direct amends to anyone during this process, you aren't even telling your sponsor or anyone else the secrets within your journal.Bill W and Alcoholics Anonymous wrote the twelve steps in order for a reason. Many of us alcoholics exclaimed what an order I can't go through with it. Take this step one piece at a time and get it done as quickly as possible. This work is incredibly beneficial to your recovery from addiction and begins the process gaining your support from God which is the ultimate insurance against relapse.Below is a brief overview of how to do a 4th step like those in Alcoholics Anonymous. Each of the three parts in this article will have deeper dive videos, breakdowns, and worksheets for the fourth step. If you need support in your recovery from addiction, we at Recovered On Purpose would love to hear from you as you are doing this work.The Big Book talks about taking inventory in a business. Taking inventory of "the stock-in-trade" for the salable goods you can still use for profit and to get rid of the unsalable and damaged goods your business cannot utilize without any regret or reservation of what they may be able to create.A personal moral inventory is looking at your life and searching for the flaws in your make up as the unsalable goods and getting rid of all these defects of character with the help from a higher power you come to understand through this process.There are three areas of our lives we search during the inventory process:4th Step Resentment Inventory4th Step Fear Inventory4th Step Sex InventoryDon't worry, no one is going to read this inventory unless you share it with them. The interesting part of this is so many of us look at the inventory we need to do and instead of just doing it, we start to build up more fears and feel ashamed before anyone even knows anything in it! Also, I guarantee you, anything you are putting in any of these three categories, I have heard at least that "bad" and probably have something similar in my own. You are not alone.Starting off with resentments is always the easiest thing to do. The way I did this part and the way I have my spouses do it is to start only with writing the names down on paper of any people, institutions or principles you resent (who wronged you and you still have negative feelings about).Side note to sound smart in your next meeting: resent originates from the French "ressentir", re- being again, and sentir being "to feel" going back to the Latin "sentire". So to resent someone, is to feel again something they did to wrong you.And we're back! Write down very simply the names of people in your life you feel wronged you, institutions such as the church, the government, schools, etc. and principles like the ten commandments, feminism, conservatism, etc. Write them out and only the ones that are present in your mind, without leaving anything out.Then, next to each name, in 19 words or less (19 words is the most) the Big Book uses to explain a resentment so we might as well make it simple on ourselves first go-around), write down "the cause" of the resentment.Then, after completing those first two columns all the way down, go back to the first name, and next to the cause write down the areas within yourself it affected: self-esteem, your money (pocketbook), your ambitions (what you want out of life), personal relationships, sex relations, pride (who you think you are), or security (what you need to be ok).Now, taking a look at the third column of your resentment inventory and what parts of yourself were threatened, take a look at the exact nature of where it comes from and bracket any of the areas affected be based in fear. For example, if we look at Mr. Brown in the Big Book on page 65, you will see our self-esteem was affected in every cause of the resentment and each was based on fear. It doesn't tell us exactly why they are based on fears, but it is pretty simple to draw our own conclusions:His attention to my wife | The fear based on self-esteem could be something like, "I am afraid Mr. Brown will take my wife from me. I am afraid my wife will see Mr. Brown is better than me."Told my wife of my mistress | The fear could be, "I am afraid my wife is going to leave me. I am afraid everyone is going to find out I am a cheater."Now for the fun part of a searching and fearless moral inventory of our fears. Write one of these fears on a separate piece of paper and ask yourself, "If this (thing you're afraid of) happens, then what will happen?" For instance, if your fear is I am afraid my wife will leave me, you would probably put something like, 'I will be alone."Then ask yourself again, 'If I am alone, what will happen?' You might find your core fear that is actually running your life from these resentment driving fears is something like, I am afraid I will die alone and not leave anything behind.This process of self discovery can cause emotions from difficult events in your past that may have caused them in the first place, but life today no longer needs to be driven by a hundred forms of fear.4th step inventory without examining our true sexual conduct over the years past and our present actions is an easy way to curb responsibility and keep causing harm with our actions. This part of the fourth step turns this into an action step.Write down the names of everyone you can remember having sexual contact with in your life. I tell my spouses this means anyone, consensual or not, either sex, and the truth is more important than trying not to do it wrong. Hint: no one does a perfect fourth step, you just need to do it to where you tell yourself it is complete.Next to each name you have written down, truly examine your behavior in that relationship or interaction, and write down where you were selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate of the other person. Did you hurt this person with your conduct before or after? Did you intentionally and unjustifiably make the person jealous, suspicious, or bitter in order to run the show and get what you want? Answer all these questions with true honesty and you will discover a lot about yourself that can be improved on for how you show up in relationships.Now for the fun part! Next to these questions being answered above, write down where you were at fault for anything harmful that happened, and what you should have done differently in that situation. You are not allowed to write down "I never should have slept with her/him." That does us no good for future situationships and relationships. Something like, "I should have been honest about my intentions from the start. I should not have told him/her about other people I was talking to to make him/her jealous so they wanted me more. I should not have thrown a plate at his/her head." You know, things like that."Made a searching" implies many of these answers will not come out right when you begin to write. You must search for the answers and they will come to you. Ask God, "Remove my selfishness and help me take responsibility for my own actions." He will show you the truth.On day 25 of my addiction recovery, I had finished this fourth step inventory and went out to a secluded spot with my sponsor and read him everything I wrote and we talked about parts of my life I wrote down I had never told anyone. In my experience that day, I did not feel an enormous sense of weight coming off me, I didn't feel anger leave me as I shared, and I did not know my addiction was being lifted from me never to return.The morning after was my spiritual awakening. I was riding in my sponsor's 1983 mailman Jeep on the way to go do steps 6 & 7 and start 8, and for the first time in my life since I was twelve years old, I had no desire to drink or use. My addiction had been lifted and my recovery had truly begun. I did not feel anger at others, or like I was afraid of the future or anything from my past.I was reborn. Please, do not take this step lightly and please do not sit on this for months and become one of our brothers and sisters who relapses again and again without ever finishing this vital part of recovery.I love you so much and am so grateful you have found this post and are on the recovery journey with me. Keep close to Recovered On Purpose so we can work together helping others in a major way. I can't wait to hear from you and meet you one day, Adam.Recovered On Purpose teaches people in addiction recovery how to share their personal recovery stories effectively. By learning to tell their story, they help carry the AA Primary Purpose—reaching the alcoholic who still suffers and showing that recovery is possible.Learn How To Tell Your Recovery Story Here Tell Your StoryClick Here For The Free Relapse Prevention WorksheetAdam Vibe Guntion is an American author, speaker and thought leader in addiction treatment and recovery. After overcoming homelessness and drug addiction, Adam found his life's purpose in helping addicts find the same freedom he found. As Founder and Executive Director of the 501(c)3 nonprofit, Recovered On Purpose, and Managing Partner of Behavioral Health Partners, Adam has helped thousands find freedom from addiction all over the world.