



FOURTH STEP INVENTORY

“Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.”

“The Fourth Step is a turning point in our journey of recovery. It is time for deep personal reflection. The confusion that we attempted to mask with self-deception and drugs is about to diminish. We are embarking on a search for insight into ourselves, our feelings, our fears, our resentments, and the patterns of behavior that make up our lives.” (NA, 12&12, pg 37)

“We want to find exactly how, when, and where our natural desires have warped us. We wish to look squarely at the unhappiness this has caused others and ourselves. By discovering what our emotional deformities are, we can move toward their correction. Without a willing and persistent effort to do this, there can be little sobriety or contentment for us. Without a searching and fearless moral inventory, most of us have found that faith which really works in daily living is still out of reach.” (AA, 12&12, pg 43)

HELPFUL HINTS

PREPARATION: If you attend AA, read pages 63-71 from the BigBook, (4th Edition) and pages 42-54 in the *12&12*. If you attend NA, read pages 27-30 (6 Edition), and pages 36-48 of the *12&12*.

NOTE:

1. This inventory is **not** an exercise in beating yourself up. But you must be rigorously honest and fair.
2. The following checklist (pg 2) **suggests** what some people consider character flaws. Do not be limited by this list--add your other

flaws and assets. It is in this Fourth Step that you begin to discover your values--what you consider right and wrong, functional and dysfunctional behavior--and how you live up to your standards.

3. Keep in mind that the ASSETS can also be considered your SHORTCOMINGS (That is, Assets that you don't do, that you should be doing.)

4. Don't be discouraged when your character defects are not immediately lifted after you have completed your 5th Step--that is the ongoing work of the 6th, 7th and 10th Steps.

5. Prioritize! Spend most of your time on the **20%** of your flaws that cause **80%** of the trouble in your life. Initially check off as many flaws as you want on the checklist but then **prioritize** to the 12 that cause the most trouble. **If you list more than 12 flaws on the *Review of Flaws* form, you are probably beating yourself up!**

THE 5TH STEP: If you are in AA, consider reading Chapter 6 of the BigBook. NA Members should consider reading Chapter 4 "How it Works", page 31.

Words Used in Steps Four and Five

Moral Inventory ..A list of personality defects, violations of moral principles, defects in character, maladjustments, and dysfunctional behavior.

CharacterThis is the internal quality of your spiritual/behavioral identity; a reflection and result of your behavior – Honorable or Dishonorable.

Defect.....Something you do that you should not do.

Shortcoming.....Something you don't do, that you should be doing.

Dishonest.....The inability to tell the truth influences a deceptive, minimizing, sneaky way(s).

Fear Painful emotion marked by alarm, dread, anxiety, agitation, uneasiness, apprehension, etc.

Nature The essential characteristic of a person or thing.

Selfish..... Too much concerned with one's own welfare or interests and having little or no concern for others (same as self-centered).

Informative Thought

Processing..... This is Recovery. No longer are you allowing your feelings to distract you from gathering objective information to bring clarity to your discontent or pain. Now you seek truth, wisdom and common sense. Honesty, Open-mindedness and Willingness happens here.

CHECKLIST OF FLAWS AND ASSETS

DEFECT	ASSET
aggressive, belligerent	good-natured, gentle
angry	forgiving, calm, generous
apathetic	interested, concerned, alert
apprehensive, afraid	calm, courageous
argumentative, quarrelsome	agreeable
arrogant, insolent	unassuming, humble
attacking, critical	fair, self-restrained
avoidant	faces problems and acts
blocking	honest, intuitive
boastful	modest, humble
careless	careful, painstaking, concerned
cheating	honest
competitive (socially)	cooperative
compulsive	free
conceited, self-important	humble, modest
contradictory, oppositional	reasonable, agreeable
contrary, intractable, pigheaded	reasonable
controlling	lets go, esp. of other's lives
cowardly	brave
critical	non-judgmental, praising, tolerant,
cynical	open-minded
deceitful	guileless, honest
defensive	open to criticism
defiant, contemptuous	respectful
denying	honest, accepting
dependent	accepts help but is self-reliant
depressed, morose	hopeful, optimistic, cheerful
dirty, poor hygiene	clean
dishonest	honest
disloyal, treacherous	faithful, loyal
disobedient	obedient
disrespectful, insolent	respectful, reverent
enabling	setting boundaries, tough love
envying	empathetic, generous, admiring
evasive, deceitful	candid, straightforward
exaggerating	honest, realistic
faithless, disloyal	reliable, faithful
falsely modest	honest, has self-esteem
falsely prideful	modest, humble
fantasizing, unrealistic	practical, realistic
fearful	confident, courageous

DEFECT	ASSET
forgetful	responsible
gluttonous, excessive	moderate
gossiping	closed-mouth, kind, praising
greedy	moderate, generous, sharing
hateful	forgiving, loving, concerned for others
hypersensitive	tolerant, doesn't personalize
ill-tempered, bitchy	good-tempered, calm
impatient	patient
impulsive, reckless	consistent, considered actions
inconsiderate	thoughtful, considerate
indecisive, timid	firm, decisive
indifferent, apathetic, aloof	caring
inflexible, stubborn	open-minded, flexible
insecure, anxious	self-confident, secure
insincere, hypocritical	sincere, honest
intolerant	tolerant, understanding, patient
irresponsible, reckless	responsible
isolating, solitary	sociable, outgoing
jealous	trusting, generous, admiring
judgmental	broadminded, tolerant
justifying (own actions)	honest, frank, candid
lack of purpose	purposeful
lazy, indolent	industrious, conscientious
loud	tasteful, quiet
lustful	healthy sexuality
lying	honest
manipulative	candid, honest, non-controlling
masked, closed	honest, open, candid
nagging	supportive
narrow minded	open minded
obscene, crude	modest, courteous
over emotional	emotionally stable
perfectionist	realistic goals
pessimistic	realistic, hopeful, optimistic, trusting
possessive	generous
prejudiced	open-minded
procrastinates	disciplined, acts promptly
projecting (negative)	clear sighted, optimistic
rationalizing	candid, honest
resentful bitter, hateful	forgiving
resisting growing	willing to grow
rude, discourteous	polite, courteous

DEFECT	ASSET
sarcastic	praising, tolerant
self-important	humble, modest
self-centered	caring of others
self-destructive, self-defeating	self-fulfilling
self-hating	self-accepting, loving
self-justifying	admitting wrongs, humble
self-pitying	grateful, realistic, accepting
self-righteous	humble, understanding
self-seeking	selfless, concerned for others
selfish	altruistic, concerned with others
shy	outgoing
slothful (lazy)	industrious, taking action
spiteful, malicious	forgiving
stealing	honest
stubborn	open-minded, willing
sullen	cheerful
superior, grandiose, pretentious	humble
superstitious	realistic, no magical thinking
suspicious	trusting
tense	calm, serene
thinking negatively	being positive
treacherous	trustworthy
undisciplined, self-indulgent	disciplined
unfair	fair
unfriendly, hostile, bitchy	friendly
ungrateful	thankful, grateful
unkind, mean, malicious, spiteful	kind
unsupportive of others	supportive
untrustworthy, unreliable, dishonest	trustworthy
useless, destructive	helpful
vain	modest, humble
vindictive	forgiving
violent	gentle
vulgar ³	polite
wasteful	thrifty
willful	accepting of the inevitable
withdrawn	outgoing
wordy, verbose	frank, to the point, succinct
Remember: Shortcomings can be assets that you don't practice.	

Instructions for Completion

First, we searched out the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure. Make sure you can identify the flaw correctly:

Defects (something I do that I shouldn't) or **Shortcomings** (assets I don't do, that I should be doing)

REVIEW OF FLAWS

(My Character Defects & Shortcomings)

	FLAW (DEFECT)	Specifically, what motivated this behavior? (What instincts, impulses, or assumptions fueled this behavior?)
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	FLAW (SHORTCOMING)	Specifically, what motivated this behavior? (What instincts, impulses, or assumptions fueled this behavior?)
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12		
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Instructions for Completion

REVIEW OF ASSETS

What assets do you have that if practiced daily, would help prevent defects or shortcomings of character?

	ASSET	How could this character asset help me correct adverse instincts, impulses, and assumptions and therefore prevent character/behavioral defects and shortcomings?
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ASSUMPTIONS, SUSPICIONS & CONTEMPT

ASSUMPTIONS: You know what it means to assume, don't you? An assumption is actually an *uninformed truth*. It's easy to make assumptions about someone or something from a distance – there's no evidence at hand to substantiate! But you sound well educated as if to have unquestionable supported proof (but you don't!). Assumptions can also appear like a judgment because they are fueled by your hurt feelings (sometimes we attach a current situation or person to a person or situation from our distant past). So, what and when and why do you tend to assume?

SUSPICIONS: Suspicions prove your assumptions. You've had a situation occur at close range which reminds you of traumatic experiences from the past. The immediate feelings rising up in you often relate to unresolved pain (ptsd). Even though there is still no verified evidence to prove your suspicion, you trust your memories and that attached feelings rising up inside of you. You protect yourself and even push back as a means to protect yourself. *SO, what or who are you suspicious of?*

CONTEMPT: “There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance – that principle is CONTEMPT PRIOR TO INVESTIGATION.” – Herbert Spencer, AA pg 568 . Contempt occurs when you've done no work to resolve the concerns that make you assume or suspicious. You are likely one or all: defiant, bitter, arrogant, non-compliant, unwilling, closed-minded and addicted to self. *What is your contempt?*

	I TEND TO ASSUME...	I AM SUSPICIOUS OF...	I HAVE CONTEMPT FOR...
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ASSUMPTIONS, SUSPICIONS & CONTEMPT

Continued...

	I TEND TO ASSUME...	I AM SUSPICIOUS OF...	I HAVE CONTEMPT FOR...
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RESENTMENTS

INSTRUCTIONS: List all persons or things whom you *resent* in the columns below, followed by the cause and situation. Remember, a resentment is your inability to forgive someone or something because of an unmet expectation or harm they caused. A resentment is often also the result of assumptions, suspicions and contempt. You likely have recurring memories, dreams, etc, and feel bitter, annoyed, hateful and/or angry. You just can't let it go, even if the harm was caused many years ago. The event or harm is still used as an excuse for your current feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors (For example, "*This is the way I am because of how I was raised...It is what it is, I am what I am!*"). If you recently resolved a resentment, it is important that you still document it here and explain how this resentment has been forgiven. **Keep in mind: There is a difference between forgiveness and forgotten! Just because it is forgotten or in the past, doesn't mean it is forgiven. Truth be told, you haven't forgotten the harm that was caused.**

	I'm RESENTFUL at:	What did this person(s) do to me? Was it intentional? Are you an innocent victim? Is forgiveness possible?
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2		
3		
4		
5		
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7		
8		

INVENTORY OF FEARS

“TO FEAR SOMETHING IS TO ALLOW WORRIES TO CONTROL YOU”

abandonment	flying	needing anyone
aging	fourth & fifth steps	not being good enough
anger	future	not being happy
authority figures	getting fat or thin	not being liked
being alone	God	not being perfect
being deceived	going home	people (specify who)
being found out	going out on a “whim”	police
being myself	having children	poverty
change	homelessness	procrastination
compliments	homosexuality	rape
confrontation	honesty	rejection
creditors	humiliation	relationships
death	hurting others	resentments
denial	I’m a fraud and others will find out	responsibility
disapproval	incarceration	risks
disease	intimacy	saying that I can’t do something
divorce	IRS, the	sex
embarrassment	letting go	sponsor
employment	living	success
facing myself	loneliness	unemployment
failure	losing hope	unknown
fear	love	violence
feelings	mediocrity	work
financial insecurity	money	

Search your own experience for other fears.

FEARS & WORRIES

Instructions for Completion

What do you fear? Is it family, friends, neighbors, acquaintances? Do you fear your own feelings, thoughts, beliefs, or behaviors? Do you fear others feelings, thoughts, beliefs and behaviors? FEAR is an unpleasant emotion caused by the belief that someone or something is dangerous, likely to cause pain, or a threat. Fear is a vital response to physical and emotional danger—if we didn't feel it, we couldn't protect ourselves from legitimate threats. But often we fear situations that are far from life-or-death, and thus hang back for no good reason. Traumas or bad experiences can trigger a fear response within us that is hard to defeat. Yet exposing ourselves to our personal demons is the best way to move past them.

	I FEAR THIS IN MYSELF...	I FEAR THIS IN OTHERS...
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INVENTORY OF INSECURITIES

“Do those things, say those things, think those things which will take you outside of yourself. If you do this, you will find yourself.”

- The Search for Serenity, And How to Achieve It. Pg 54

Common Insecurities	YES or NO	Explain...
1. You dwell on the smallest issue, while knowing it is irrational.		
2. You still don't feel like an adult.		
3. You don't think anyone finds you attractive.		
4. You feel like everyone is watching you or judging you.		
5. You worry that you might actually be crazy.		
6. You think if people knew the real you, they wouldn't like you.		
7. You have random violent, bizarre or gross thoughts/dreams.		
8. You feel incapable of developing and maintaining healthy relationships		
9. You think everyone is definitely happier than you.		
10. You believe everyone is out to get you.		
11. You think nobody, even professionals, can understand your issues.		
12. You worry that you might actually be a monster, or worse...		
13. You've had passing thoughts of suicide		
14. You think people purposely ignore you		
15. You don't think anyone can relate to what you're going through.		
16. You think people don't care about your feelings, so you stay quiet.		
17. You just feel really freaking alone... like a man on an island.		
18. You think you won't ever be good enough to receive praise		
19. You can't look in the eyes of people when they are talking to you.		
20. You can't look at pictures of yourself; you don't like what you see.		

SEXUAL HARMS

Instructions for Completion

Complete each column top to bottom before going on to the next column.

Column 1 *We reviewed our sexual conduct/behavior over the years. Who did we harm sexually?*

Column 2 *What motivated my behavior (that is, what was the original instincts that prompted my conduct*

COLUMN 1

COLUMN 2

	Who did I harm Sexually?	Specifically, what motivated this behavior? (What instincts, impulses, or assumptions fueled this behavior?)
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LIST OF HARMS DONE TO OTHERS

Instructions for Completion

Complete each column top to bottom before going on to the next column.

Column 1 *We reviewed ALL HARMFUL BEHAVIORS. Who did we hurt intentionally or unintentionally during of our addiction?*

Column 2 *Where were we at fault? What motivated my behavior (that is, what was the original instinct(s) that prompted my conduct?)*

	Column 1 Who did I harm?	Column 2 Specifically, what motivated this behavior? (What instincts, impulses, or assumptions fueled this behavior?)
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LIST OF HARMS, Continued...

	Who did I harm?	Specifically, what motivated this behavior? (What instincts, impulses, or assumptions fueled this behavior?)
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**MY GRATITUDE
ASSESSMENT**

GRATITUDE IS THE APPRECIATION OF WHAT IS VALUABLE AND MEANINGFUL TO ONESELF.
IT IS A GENERAL STATE OF THANKFULNESS AND/OR APPRECIATION, EVEN FOR SITUATIONS OR EVENTS IN OUR PAST OR PRESENT THAT WERE CHALLENGING TO ACCEPT.

	I'm GRATEFUL FOR	WHY I AM GRATEFUL

Name _____ Date _____

...ON TO THE 5TH STEP!

“Having made our personal inventory, what shall we do about it? We have been trying to get a new attitude, a new relationship with our Creator, and to discover the obstacles in our path. We have admitted certain defects; we have ascertained in a rough way what the trouble is; we have put our finger on the weak items in our personal inventory. Now these are about to be cast out. This requires action on our part, which, when completed, will mean that we have admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our defects.” (AA, Chapter 6, pg 72)

“The 5th Step is the key to freedom. It allows us to live clean in the present. Sharing the exact nature of our wrongs sets us free to live. After taking a thorough Fourth Step, we deal with the contents of our inventory. We are told that if we keep these defects inside us, they will lead us back to using. Holding on to our past would eventually sicken us and keep us from taking part in our new way of life. If we are not honest when we take a 5th Step, we will have the same negative results that dishonesty brought us in the past. Step 5 suggests that we admit to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. We looked at our wrongs, examined our behavior patterns, and started to see the deeper aspects of our disease. Now we sit with another person and share our inventory out loud. Our higher power will be with us during our 5th Step. We will receive help and be free to face ourselves and another human being.” (NA 6th Edition, Chapter 4, pg 31)

WHO IS “ANOTHER HUMAN BEING” THAT I NEED IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE 5TH STEP?

This person should be the most reliable and dependable person you know outside of your family and friends. Try to find a person that has proven to be responsible, respectable, confidential, and safe. It would be very beneficial that this person knows the purpose of the 5th Step, and is familiar with the 12 Step Process.

The 5th Step is intended to be a onetime event whereby the presence of God and another human provide you with the grace and safety to cast out all your burdens of fears, resentments, harms, etc. Persons that choose not to complete this Step carry their burdens onward. Yet those who cast all their burdens onto God with the support of another person receive freedom and motivation to continue the journey into recovery and spiritual sobriety.