

Step One

EMBRACING POWERLESSNESS AND FINDING HOPE

The first step in Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) involves recognizing and admitting our powerlessness over alcohol and acknowledging that our lives have become unmanageable. This step is critical as the starting point for the journey of recovery. It's grounded in the concepts of powerlessness, hopelessness, unmanageability (both external and internal), as described in "The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous." This worksheet aims to facilitate deep reflection on these concepts, helping you to internalize the first step's principles and apply them to your life.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Allocate quiet time for yourself, ensuring you will not be disturbed.
2. Keep a notebook or digital document open for your answers, and have "The Big Book" handy for reference.
3. Approach each question with honesty and openness. There is no right or wrong answer here; it is about your personal experience and understanding.

Part One

POWERLESSNESS

Reflection on Powerlessness

Describe what feeling powerless over alcohol means to you. How have you tried to control your drinking in the past, and what were the outcomes?

"Most of us have been unwilling to admit we were real alcoholics. No person likes to think he is bodily and mentally different from his fellows. Therefore, it is not surprising that our drinking careers have been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove we could drink like other people. The idea that somehow, someday he will control and enjoy his drinking is the great obsession of every abnormal drinker. The persistence of this illusion is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of insanity or death. 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."

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But the actual or potential alcoholic, with hardly an exception, will be absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge.

Powerlessness in the Big Book

Refer to the chapters "There Is A Solution" and "More About Alcoholism" in The Big Book. Identify a passage that speaks to you about powerlessness. How does this passage reflect your own experiences?

Part Two

HOPELESSNESS

Understanding Hopelessness

Hopelessness might feel like being stuck in a cycle without escape. Reflect on a moment when you felt this hopelessness concerning your ability to control your drinking. How did that moment influence your decision to seek help?

Connecting with Stories in the Big Book

Find a personal story within The Big Book that resonates with your feelings of hopelessness. Summarize the story and how it helps you feel understood or less alone in your journey.

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The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink

Part Three

UNMANAGEABILITY

External Unmanageability

Unmanageability often shows up in our external lives (work, relationships, legal issues).

Write about a specific instance where your drinking led to a situation that felt out of control.

Internal Unmanageability

This refers to the emotional and mental chaos that can come from addiction. Describe aspects of your internal life (feelings, thoughts, beliefs) that have been unmanageable because of your relationship with alcohol.

Reflection from the Big Book

The chapter "Bill's Story" provides insight into unmanageability. Find a quote or section that you feel encapsulates the concept of unmanageability in your life. Explain your choice.

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We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking. We know that no real alcoholic ever recovers control.

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The fact is that most alcoholics, for reasons yet obscure, have lost the power of choice in drink. Our so-called will power becomes practically nonexistent.

Part Four

HOPE AND RECOVERY

Finding Hope

In the context of admitting powerlessness and recognizing unmanageability, how do you find hope? Consider the shared experiences in AA meetings or the stories within The Big Book.

The Role of the Big Book

How does The Big Book and the fellowship of AA help restore hope in your life? Are there specific chapters or quotes that inspire you? What Step are you specifically eager to explore?

Conclusion

- Review your reflections and consider how acknowledging powerlessness and unmanageability serves as a foundation for your recovery.
- Write a commitment to yourself about your willingness to move forward in the recovery process, despite the challenges of admitting powerlessness and facing unmanageability.

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We are unable, at certain times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago. We are without defense against the first drink.

Reflection

- How has working through this worksheet affected your perspective on the first step and your journey of recovery?
- Consider sharing your insights and reflections with your sponsor or in an AA meeting. Listening to others and sharing your own experience is a powerful aspect of the AA recovery process.

This worksheet is designed to prompt reflection on the core concepts of the first step of Alcoholics Anonymous. While personal and direct references to “The Big Book” are encouraged, this worksheet does not include direct citations to ensure adherence to copyright norms. Engaging with the actual text of “The Big Book” as you complete this worksheet will greatly enhance your understanding and experience.

Congratulations!

Congratulations on completing **Step One: Embracing Powerlessness and Finding Hope** worksheet! Taking the time to deeply reflect on your experiences with powerlessness and unmanageability marks a significant milestone in your journey towards recovery. By engaging honestly with these questions, you've started laying the foundational stones of understanding, acceptance, and hope. This process is not easy, and it requires courage and strength to confront these realities head-on. Remember, each step forward, no matter how small it might seem, is a move towards healing and reclaiming your life. Be proud of yourself for undertaking this work, and remember that you're not alone on this path. Keep holding onto the hope and resilience that brought you this far, and continue to reach out to your community in AA for support and encouragement. Well done!