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Step Four - "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."

Taking a Look at the 'Living Legend'

I wasn't afraid of Step Four until I heard about the emotional agony and shame that was supposed to go with it. My first attempt was a litany that told how uniquely terrible I was; it failed miserably, I suffered mightily, and the step still wasn't done. For me recovery is slow and I balk a lot but I don't believe it should be vicious; so, being the perfectionist that I am, I went through the Big Book and the "Twelve and Twelve" one sentence at a time. This is what worked for me.

I made a list of everyone I had ever met in my entire life. The first name was the first human in my earliest memory. I put down friends and their relatives, my relatives and all their friends, school chums, cops, teachers, janitors, girlfriends, In-laws, bosses, and salesclerks. If I remembered a face but no name I wrote a short description so as not to forget. Nothing sensational or painful, just long and thorough and boring. God, as I understood him then, allowed me to keep plodding along and not skimp.

Then I went back to the beginning and inserted the buildings, homes, laws, churches, rules, and animals that I remembered. Even God was on the list whenever it was that he came into my life. As I wrote I would jog my memory and have to add people and things that I had overlooked. When I was done I had a long list of every person, place, and thing in my life.

I wrote the list again and left a couple of spaces between each entry. Then, praying for honesty, I went through the list and crossed off everyone and everything I didn't resent. When I was done I saw a lot crossed off and that was very positive. Whatever was left meant resentments, so I used page 65 of the Big Book as an example and listed the cause of my anger (the why), and what part of my emotional security was threatened. I prayed for thoroughness and honesty and studied pages 64 to 67 to learn.

The Big Book then said I was to make a list of every fear I ever had. I was afraid of the dark and afraid of dying and afraid of getting caught stealing. I was afraid of heights and sometimes afraid of big dogs, and on went the list, whether I had resentments in connection with the fears or not. All of my fears were written down and then I checked page 68 to learn about them.

Then came the part about sex and I made a third list. It had the name of every partner in every sexual relationship I could ever remember. That meant from holding hands and playing doctor to whatever the most recent was. With some

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Concept IV

At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

Tradition Four - "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole."

Welcome to the Big Top

In AA, we submerge our differences to focus on alcoholism as our primary problem. But this doesn't dismiss the notion that we come from widely divergent backgrounds. Recovery seems to work best when it is culturally relevant. Cultural relevance is just a fancy term for identification.

Some years ago, I received a call from a friend who was concerned because a man dressed in women's clothing was attending meetings of her women's AA group. Upon further inquiry, it became clear that he was an alcoholic, pre-operative male-to-female transsexual trying to find a place in AA to fit in. He just didn't feel comfortable in general AA meetings, men's meetings, or gay/lesbian meetings. My friend's group was flexible, and the women there had big, warm, accepting hearts. So they took him in.

About a year ago, a friend and I were twelfth-stepping a new man in a restaurant. In addition to being an alcoholic, the man had been an intravenous drug user and a prison gang member. He was also on parole and his ethnicity was different from mine and my friend's. We were getting nowhere, so my friend called another member of our group. In addition to being an alcoholic, he also had been an intravenous drug user and a prison gang member. He was on parole, of the same ethnicity as the new man, and sober two years. He came over, and the two of them got along famously.

In both these instances--and many others--AA members operated in the finest tradition of Twelfth-Step work, meeting newcomers where they were at, not where we thought they ought to be; helping them identify; introducing them to other AA members with whose stories they might identify.

A few years ago, I met a new AA member who was an undercover narcotics detective. His job was to hang around bars and buy as many drugs as he could. (My old thinking said it sounded like a dream job!) But it was tough for him to stay sober under those circumstances. He didn't talk about his job at meetings, and he wasn't ready to let his fellow officers know he was in AA. So I encouraged him to attend an AA meeting for cops. He found this very helpful in maintaining his sobriety.

Another time, I met with an attorney who had written a textbook that was being used in law schools. Of course, that didn't keep him from getting thrown in jail when he got drunk and assaulted somebody. He was a bit pompous and quite impressed with himself. So he was thrilled when I asked him if he wanted to go to an AA meeting for lawyers. His colleagues cut him down to size pretty quickly, and they also started running him around to other AA meetings and introducing him to the Fellowship as a whole.

I've done similar things with doctors, priests, and pilots. As Bill W. wrote in Concept Twelve: "When our actors and cops and priests want their own private groups, we say, 'Fine! Why don't you try that idea out?'" These folks are sometimes overidentified with their professional roles, or their alcoholic behavior has threatened their ability to practice. Often they are excessively concerned that their patients, clients, licensing boards, or professional organizations will find out about their alcoholism. For those whose professional circumstances initially seem to pose a barrier to joining AA, these specialized AA meetings serve as a safe bridge into the wider world of Alcoholics Anonymous as most of us know it.

Of course, I know many professionals who do not attend profession-specific AA meetings. They simply don't find such meetings necessary or helpful in maintaining their sobriety. To each his own or, as we say in AA, *Live and Let Live*.

When I was active in young people's groups, I received a phone call from an old-timer complaining that young people's groups were trying to be separate and different and weren't really a part of AA after all. I was surprised, because I always thought that young people's groups were simply trying to present AA's message of recovery more effectively to young alcoholics. She just would not hear it and continued to berate the young people's movement. Finally I said, "Perhaps you're right. Why don't you talk it over at the closed women's AA meeting you have at your house that I can't attend?" She got the point rather quickly after that.

To me, the International Conference of Young People in AA, the International Advisory Council for Homosexual Men and Women in AA, International Doctors in AA, International Lawyers in AA, and Birds of a Feather (for pilots) are all part of Alcoholics Anonymous. They may not be part of our general service structure, but they are part of AA. By action of the General Service Conference, these special international contacts are listed in the front of AA directories furnished by the General Service Office.

Our Fourth Tradition of autonomy ensures that we avoid the rigidity that would destroy AA and interfere with our ability to appeal to more and different kinds of sick alcoholics. We don't know how AA's message of recovery might need to be played out a century from now. But the AA groups of that time will know, and they will exercise their autonomy to meet that need.

Fortunately, we don't have formats and charters and regulations one must follow to start an AA group or hold

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Recovery Word Puzzle

G I D G R I B N
Y R U E J N O
T O P R U P S
T A M O O Y U N
Q E N E S E C U
D A Y R O R I N



D E E L N G
M E T O P C E L
H E D S I G R A C
N Y V R I T E O N
B A S L E R N A E O
N A T R E H E E D T

Unscramble the letters. Answers to puzzle can be found on page 7.

(continued from page 2)

an AA meeting. We have a body of experience, and we'll share it with anyone if they're interested. But if they want to try something new, we welcome that and actively encourage it. We don't just begrudgingly accept it. Every group has the right to be wrong--and often they turn out to be right.

When our co-founder Bill W. was newly sober, he was helped a great deal by reading *The Varieties of Religious Experience* by William James. Significantly, it wasn't called *The Similarities of Religious Experience*. There are many paths to the Higher Power. In AA, what's different is good.

We need more and different kinds of AA groups and meetings to appeal to the increasingly diverse alcoholics who come to AA today. The Fourth Tradition's spirit of autonomy creates an atmosphere that allows this to happen. AA is a big tent, and there's room for all of us under the big top. And isn't the circus fun?

-- Paul C., Oceanside, California

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Volunteer Opportunities

Last Intergroup Appreciation Banquet planning meeting

INTERGROUP OFFICE, 3317 NW 10th Terrace, Ste. 404, Ft. Lauderdale

TUESDAY, APRIL 16TH — 6:00 PM

FOUNDERS' DAY PICNIC planning meetings

Skyline Chili, 2834 N University Drive, Sunrise - Wednesday, April 10 - 7 PM

Denny's, 3151 NW 9th Avenue, Ft. Lauderdale - Wednesday, April 24 - 7 PM

2019 Gratitude Dinner, to be held in November, has the next planning meeting

April 28th - 1:00 PM

Twelve Step House, 205 SW 23rd Street, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33060 (back room)

Pick up a commitment today!!
SERVICE KEEPS YOU SOBER



(Continued from page 1)

embarrassment I included myself. Then I checked page 69 and reviewed my conduct. I noted where I was dishonest or selfish or where I caused bitterness or suspicion. Wherever I was at fault I made a note of what I should have done instead. These notes gave me a sane and sound guide for future relationships.

Then I looked for whatever was next and found I was done. I kept wanting to write down what a rotten person I was but couldn't find the instructions. Step Four was sometimes emotionally painful and usually embarrassing but it was never the trial that was described to me. The words that are sprinkled throughout the writing on Step Four (detailed, painstaking, diligent, careful) are now in perspective, and I have lost my fear of me *and* of Step Four (which were both on my list of fears).

There are two sentences in the "Twelve and Twelve" that have lost their mystery:

"We want to find out exactly how, when, and where our natural desires have warped us."

"We thought conditions drove us to drink, and when we tried to correct these conditions and found that we couldn't to our entire satisfaction, our drinking went out of hand and we became alcoholics."

My inventory was in sequence. I saw a summer and fall in the late 1960s where there was a momentous change in my drinking and my personality. It was so baffling that I can only say that I was transformed. I looked at my Step Four and now I know when my drinking went out of hand and I became an alcoholic. The Big Book says if I thoroughly follow its path of recovery I will learn these things about myself.

I also saw that very early in my life I was a much more ordinary person, not emotionally cruel, not suicidal, not a bigot. I saw a gradual change from "health to sickness" and then after sobriety from "sickness to health."

The word "restore" in Step Two became clear. Restore means to bring back to a former normal condition. As I looked at the sequence of what I had written and trusted in my Higher Power I saw in myself a basic goodness that wasn't sick and that was there before I drank. It was buried deeply inside. It finally came home that I really was worth saving.

I believe that every word in the Big Book's program of recovery has its ordinary meaning. It's the simplicity of the ordinary words that makes everything magic.

Those truths let me be safe and comfortable in doing exactly what I read there. And so it was with my Step Four. It was a long way from the horrible terror I had been told about. It was a bit emotionally painful and a lot boring and embarrassing because of my false pride. It was pretty ordinary, and I wasn't the living legend I had been telling everyone about.

I continue to balk and stumble and am impatient at my snail's pace of growth, but I am sober and for that I am grateful.

-- R. C., Edmonton, Alberta

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Do you have a gift to be raffled off at our Intergroup Appreciation Banquet on April 27th?

Please call the office and complete form on flyer so that we can get them
to the office and ready with labels no later than Thursday, April 25th .

954-462-0265 or Elizabeth at 203-515-1265

Thank you all for your support. Hope to see you at the Banquet!



General Service Office, NY

P.O. Box 459
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New York, NY 10164-0371
212.870.3400

Bridging The Gap

877.207.2242

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BCIC

P.O. Box 22701
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Area 15 General Service

Treasurer, PO Box 1784
Pompano Beach, FL 33061

District 9 General Service

P.O. Box 100126
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310

AA BIRTHDAY'S

April Celebrants

Riverside Group

Chris ~ 3 yrs.
Donna C. ~ 18 yrs.
Jeri ~ 34 yrs.
Laurie B. ~ 12 yrs.

Serenity Altogether

John H. ~ 28 yrs.
Lin F. ~ 47 yrs.

Ft. Lauderdale

Women's

Susan H. ~ 30 yrs.

Into Action

Robin D. ~ 10 yrs.

Women's Honesty

Phyllis K. ~ 47 yrs.

Women's Step Into

Sobriety

Morgana A. ~ 6 yrs.

Y.A.N.A.

Cheryl L. ~ 25 yrs.
Steve P. ~ 3 yrs.

Express Group

Joanna P. ~ 15 yrs.
Maryann M. ~ 23 yrs.
Iris S. ~ 32 yrs.
Edna C. ~ 10 yrs.

Sober Sisters

Toni D. ~ 18 yrs.
Sara M. ~ 22 yrs.

Friends of Pat C.

Marla B. ~ 9 yrs.
Kathleen I. ~ 35 yrs.

One Day at a Time

Kelly M. ~ 15 yrs.

Saturday Night

Sobriety

Pat G. ~ 17 yrs.

Happy Destiny

Kris R. ~ 3 yrs.

Mountain Group

Michele O. ~ 10 yrs.
Craig L. ~ 12 yrs.
Rob B. ~ 35 yrs.

Early Risers

Steve L. ~ 20 yrs.

Meditation at the Rock

Sara P. ~ 1 yr.

Rule 62

Bonnie T. ~ 16 yrs.

Other Notables

Rosie A. ~ 21 yrs.
Kris R. ~ 11 yrs.
Hal N. ~ 4 yrs.
John A. ~ 41 yrs.
Andrew M. ~ 10 yrs.
Camilo ~ 29 yrs.
Jose C. ~ 7 yrs.
John M. ~ 6 yrs.
Sue F. ~ 11 yrs.
Lonnie D. ~ 17 yrs.
Abbi D. ~ 16 yrs.
Allison W. ~ 6 yrs.
Eileen G. ~ 46 yrs.

Joy of Sobriety

Paul P. ~ 32 yrs.

East Naples Men's

Paul B. ~ 34 yrs.
Stew ~ 34 yrs.

JOIN THE BIRTHDAY CLUB!

Celebrate your sobriety by sending \$1 per every year sober to your local Intergroup office to show your gratitude and give back once a year.

(Birthday listings are not contingent upon contributions...we just like to celebrate sobriety.)

BRIDGING THE GAP

has a new number

724-680-0430



Riverside Group ~ 37 yrs.

One Day at a Time ~ 32 yrs.

Let's Do Lunch Bunch ~ 31 yrs.

Sunlight of the Spirit Group ~ 18 yrs.

March Celebrants not previously mentioned

Coral Ridge Group

Tracie D. ~ 10 yrs.

Women's Step Into

Sobriety

Betsy B. ~ 10 yrs.

5:45 Happy Hour

Dana ~ 24 yrs.
Rick ~ 27 yrs.

Let's Do Lunch Bunch

Miguel ~ 1 yr.
Joe G. ~ 28 yrs.
Richard B. ~ 7 yrs.

D.A.W.G.

Denise R. ~ 19 yrs.

Women's Honesty

Maria M. ~ 8 yrs.
Erica C. ~ 31 yrs.
Elizabeth P. ~ 34 yrs.



**BCIC - Broward County
Institutions Committee**

**Next Meeting:
April 13th - 10:00 a.m.**

**Twelve Step House
205 SW 23rd St., Ft. Lauderdale**

**Next
Intergroup Meeting**

**Twelve Step House
205 S.W. 23rd St., Ft. Lauderdale**

**SUNDAY, April 28th
at 1:00 p.m.**

Local Readers Share.....

Step Four was an exciting step for me! Working step four with a sponsor, was the beginning of me becoming a real person....

Hearing about step four at a meeting, I thought, "WOW! To continue my journey, all I have to do is tell my sponsor all the things I don't like about the world, and how it has been treating me..? Awesome!" I was ready to get to it. My sponsor said to make a list of all my resentments, which she explained were all the things that made me boil inside. She said put down as many as you can think of. Oh boy! This was going to be easy. Then, I could tell her exactly why I drank. I knew anyone who heard my list would agree that I definitely had good reasons to drink.

UH-OH!! Wait!! My sponsor now told me to look at me. Oh my God! What did she mean? How could I have done anything..? I was the victim!

My sponsor and I had a lengthy discussion and I began to see things through a "new pair of glasses", so to speak. I began to see how I had been selfish, self-centered, dishonest, a people pleaser, irresponsible and egotistical. Now, I was able to do the step in earnest and really begin to see myself. I was no longer a victim. I was a sick alcoholic who had been surviving without a program.

Working that thorough 4th Step with my sponsor truly changed my life. After, I finally became a real person – ME! Before, I had been whatever and whoever you wanted me to be, but now I was a person. I am me. I know who and what I am. I have a plan to become the very best ME, and that will happen as I continue to work through the rest of the twelve steps.

-Carol B., Ft. Lauderdale

Two meetings in Fort Lauderdale need your support...

JUST FOR TODAY and THERE IS A SOLUTION

Mondays & Thursdays at 7 PM

Church by the Sea, 2700 Mayan Drive (just off the 17th Street Causeway)

Both open discussion meetings.

THERE IS A NEW DAYTIME MEETING GETTING STARTED IN PEMBROKE PINES

Fridays at 11 AM

West Pines Community Church
21113 Johnson Street

Things we cannot change.....



Ed T.

*He will be missed. May he
Rest in Peace.*

Definition of Broward County Intergroup, Inc.

Your Intergroup office services all groups in the Broward County area. It is not a governing body and does not attempt to, nor can it, rule any AA Group. Its sole purpose is to act as a clearinghouse for the convenience of members and groups desiring assistance, and to extend the Twelve Step Work "carrying the message" to the sick alcoholic. The Intergroup office is supported entirely by contributions from groups, usually a specified amount each month or at intervals throughout the year.

The office purchases and sells all conference-approved books and literature to groups throughout Broward County.

Faithful Fivers are A.A. members who donate five dollars (\$5) a month to Intergroup as an act of gratitude. Their generosity helps us to carry the message of A.A. to the still sick and suffering alcoholic throughout the year.

Thank you to our Faithful Fivers. Your contributions are so appreciated!

Tom & Liz J., Gregory C., Suzanne J., Bob H., Anonymous I, Elizabeth B., Ron J., Tim S., Lois O., Richard H., Jennifer S., Pat R., Beth D., Craig G., Sandy P., Leo H., Vickie T., Howie K., Kerry W., Lewis G., James H., Joanne D., Gerry B., Don W., Eric P., Tara D., Denise J., Howard S., Bob D., Robert H., Sally S., Anonymous II, Jane T., Fran C., Peter S., Deborah C., Women's Step by Step and Rachel L.

Please consider becoming a "Faithful Fiver." Your commitment of \$5.00 a month to your Intergroup Office will go a long way toward helping carry the message to the still sick and suffering alcoholic who reaches out. Fill out this form and mail it in with your contribution today!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Sobriety Date and Home Group _____

Make checks payable to:

Broward County Intergroup, Inc., 3317 NW 10th Terrace, Suite 404, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309

ANSWERS TO PUZZLE: bridging, journey, support, autonomy, sequence, ordinary, legend, complete, discharge, inventory, reasonable, threatened.

I AM RESPONSIBLE....

WHEN ANYONE, ANYWHERE, REACHES OUT FOR HELP,
I WANT THE HAND OF A.A. ALWAYS TO BE THERE. AND FOR THAT: I AM RESPONSIBLE.

NAME: _____ GENDER: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

PREFER: VOICE: _____ TEXT: _____ EMAIL: _____ CITY OF RESIDENCE: _____

WILL CALL BACK: _____ AND/OR PAY A VISIT: _____

AVAILABILITY: MONDAY to FRIDAY: _____ WEEKENDS: _____

8:00am-12:00pm _____ 12:00pm-5:00pm _____ 5:00pm-9:00pm _____ 9:00pm-8:00am _____

TO COMPLETE A 12-STEP CALL, you only need to be sober one day, but you NEVER GO ALONE.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE! SEND COMPLETED FORM TO: help@aabroward.org



MEETING CHANGES

Wednesday

NEW MEETING Spiritual Carport West Broward Club, 8396 State Rd.84, Davie, 10 PM, Rotating Format

Thursday

Meeting in Print has moved from the hospital to Our Place 2 in Tamarac, 8447 W. McNab Road.

Downtown FTL Big Book Study which met on Broward Blvd. in Ft. Lauderdale NO LONGER MEETS.

Weston Steppers Women's meeting which was a Closed Step meeting in Weston is now an Open meeting.

Friday

NEW MEETING Friday Night Live West Broward Club, 8396 State Rd.84, Davie, 10 PM, Open Discussion

Saturday

Doing the Deal which meets at Fellowship Recovery Center in Margate now meets at 6:30 PM.

NEW MEETING The 12 & 12 at 12 now meets at the Twelve Step House, 205 SW 23 Street, Ft. Lauderdale, 6 PM, OSTR.

Late Night by Candlelight which meets at Lambda South in Fort Lauderdale will now meet at 10 PM, rather than 11 PM.

Sunday

NEW MEETING The Principles As Bill Sees It at Lambda South, 1231 E. Las Olas Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale, 7 PM, CSSg.

Sobriety in the Springs that met at Kiwanis Park in Coral Springs NO LONGER MEETS on Sundays only.

DAILY MEETINGS

Good Morning God has moved to a new permanent home. They meet every day at 10 AM at Our Place 2, located in Tamarac, 8447 W. McNab Rd. All Formats remain the same.

NEW MEETING You're Off the Hook West Broward Club, 8396 State Rd. 84, Davie. Monday—Friday 5:30 PM, M - OD, T - OSP, W - OD, Th - OLT, F - OBG.

The 63rd Florida State Convention 2019 will be held this year

in Miami, FL ~ Wednesday, July 31st—Sunday, August 4th.

Get registered today at 63.FloridaStateConvention.com

Upcoming Events

- Apr. 5-7** **South Florida Area 15 General Service Assembly** hosted by Districts 6 & 7 will be held at the Boca Raton Marriott at Boca Center, 5150 Town Center Circle, Boca Raton. This is a free service event. Come see the third legacy in action on Sunday afternoon.
- Apr. 6** **Sunlight of the Spirit 18th Anniversary** Annual breakfast meeting. St. John's Episcopal Church, 1704 Buchanan Street, Hollywood—Food and coffee at 9 AM, Speaker at 10 AM
- Apr. 27** **56th Annual Intergroup Appreciation Banquet** Tropical Acres Steakhouse, Griffin Road, Ft. Lauderdale, 6 PM Fellowship and Appetizers, 7 PM Prime Rib or Salmon Dinner, 8 PM Speakers, Followed by gift raffles. Elegant evening of fun and appreciation for the many volunteers of Broward County Intergroup. Tickets \$45 in advance only. **SOLD OUT EVENT**
- May 4** **District 9 Archives - Old Timers Meeting** Hull Auditorium, NSU, Davie—free event
- May 9-12** **Big Book Seminar 2019** in the spirit of Joe and Charlie. Boca Raton Marriott, 5150 Town Center Circle, Boca Raton. For more info and to register online go to <https://bigbookseminar.org>
- May 19-21** **AA Seniors in Sobriety** 12th International Conference, Reno-Tahoe, NV. For more info call 775.399.4627 or go to sisreg2019@gmail.com