

STEP FOUR OF THE TWELVE STEPS OF AA: "MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES"

From the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous:

" Next we launched on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, which many of us had never attempted. Though our decision was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless it was at once followed by a strenuous effort to face and to be rid of the things in ourselves which had been blocking us. Our (addiction) was but a symptom So we had to get down to the causes and conditions." 63

Therefore we started on a personal inventory and fact finding, fact facing, to discover the truth, and to disclose the damage, as any good shopkeeper would. "We took stock honestly".

"First, we searched out the flaws which causes our failure. Being convinced that self manifested in various ways was what had defeated us, we considered its common manifestations."

Resentment was the #1 offender. "It destroys more addicts than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease... we have been spiritually ill, sick" when the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically."

"It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness. With the addict/alcoholic whose hope is in the maintenance of and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of resentment is infinitely grave. We have found it is fatal" "When we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit, ... If we want to live, we had to be free from anger."

"We began to see that the world and its' people dominated us...How could we escape? We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps also spiritually sick"

"Though we did not loke their symptoms and the way these disturbed us, they like ourselves were sick. We asked God to help us show them the same endurance, pity and patience we would show a sick friend." 67

"We resolutely looked for our own mistakes, where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, frightened? When we saw our own faults, we

listed them. We admitted our wrongs honestly, and were willing to set these matters straight."

Fear - "it was a evil and corroding thread, which ought to be classified with stealing"

We reviewed our fears, why did we have them? Wasn't it because self-reliance had failed us? Now we proceeded on a different basis, the basis of trusting and relying on God." We realized that faith can do for us what we cannot do for ourselves."

From the 12&12, Step 4:

Often our faults/ misbehaviors come from 'instincts run wild' and 'balk at our investigation'. 44

"If we are on the depressive side , we are apt to be swamped with guilt, and self-loathing" "This is pride in reverse. If we are grandiose, we revert to being offended, 'we've been good' or we see that our "present anxieties and troubles are caused by other people, people who really need a moral inventory".

"In AA, we slowly learned that something had to be done about our vengeful resentments, self-pity and unwarranted pride". To see how erratic emotions victimized us often too a long time. We could quickly see in others but we had to admit we had many of these defects, we had to stop using the word, 'Blame'. 47

We had to see our own sins, using perhaps the model of the 7 Deadly Sins, of which Pride is #1.

"For pride, leading to self-justification, and always spurred by conscious and unconscious fears, is the basic breeder of most human difficulties, the chief block to our progress" "All failings generate fear, which is a soul sickness in its own right, that then fear generates more character defects."

"Once we have a complete willingness to take inventory, and exert ourselves to do the job thoroughly, a wonderful light falls, a brand new kind of confidence, is born, and relief at finally facing ourselves."