

Nar-Anon Family Groups Fourth Step Workbook: A Collection of Inventories

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

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Preface

After the fellowship voted to add a Fourth Step Workbook to its top five priorities, the World Service Literature Committee worked to complete the request. This book is a portion of that project. The vision for the workbook included eight categories: Fear Inventory, Freestyle Inventory, Peeling the Onion, Personal Safety Questions, Quick Inventories, Relationship Inventories, Resentment Inventory Chart, and *Fourth Step Inventory (for Step Meetings)*. Seven of the eight categories are included in this workbook. The Peeling the Onion section is still in progress.

Honoring the request of the fellowship, the World Service Literature Committee decided to release the seven completed portions of the Fourth Step Workbook while continuing to prepare the remaining portion for fellowship review.

The hope is that you make use of this workbook as you eagerly await the final portion.

Thanks to all those who contributed to this project,

World Service Literature Committee

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How to Use This Workbook

This workbook offers several different approaches to working Step Four, allowing us to find tools that fit our current circumstances. It is not intended to be worked from beginning to end. There is value in doing this work with a sponsor. Sponsors often see what we are missing. With the assistance of our sponsor and our Higher Power, we choose the inventory or inventories that are appropriate for where we are in our recovery.

There is no right or wrong way to do the Fourth Step. The key to Step Four is to come to a place where you are ready to move on to Step Five. The various inventories presented in this Fourth Step workbook offer endless possibilities to our entire fellowship. No matter how many times we work Step Four there is an inventory here for us.

Description of the inventories found in this workbook

Fear Inventory: Facing our fears in six questions.

Fourth Step Inventory (for Step Meetings): An inventory method to bring awareness and acceptance of our characteristics.

Freestyle Inventory: An inventory for when we do not know where to begin.

Peeling the Onion*: An inventory of our past behaviors and who we want to be.

Personal Safety Questions: An inventory exploring ways addiction affects our safety.

Quick Inventories: Three quick inventories to admit things we have been holding onto.

Relationship Inventories: Seven different inventories to reveal who we are in a relationship.

Resentment Inventory Chart: A six-part chart that takes the user through four ways of thinking to address resentments.

We read in the Nar-Anon 36, "We can compare the Twelve Steps to a flight of stairs. We use them many times until they become a way of life, leading us to peace, joy, and serenity." So, too, it is for the Fourth Step.

Get ready for a most exciting and wonderful part of the journey through recovery: learning who we are, what we need, and where we are going. We hope each member who uses this workbook shares their experience with those who have yet to embark on their Fourth Step journey.

*Will be included in a later edition

Introduction

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

The Nar-Anon Twelve Step program passes from member to member. One day at a time, we show others how we recover from the effects of living with addiction. It is through our shared experiences of working the steps that new members find hope.

Working our Fourth Step opens our minds to another way of thinking, a new way of seeing the world around us, and a different way of being in relationships with others. Honesty and awareness replace self-deception. Our trust in our Higher Power and the Nar-Anon program grows. Freedom from our past becomes a reality for us. We are ready to make changes and find a different way to live our lives. We uncover the defects of character that block us from serenity. Even before we finish, we become ready to set right any wrongs we discover.

Nar-Anon's Fourth Step workbook provides us with a variety of options. Every inventory is unique and can be used by any member working their Fourth Step, regardless of their time in Nar-Anon. Together, with our Higher Power and sponsor, we choose the inventories to use. It is not necessary to complete this entire workbook before moving on to Step Five. Our first time working Step Four, we are sweeping the floor. However, our recovery depends on continued step work. As we progress, we use other inventories to help us to explore ourselves further. Each time we write an inventory, we peel back the layers, bringing further clarity and freedom.

It is essential we feel safe as we begin writing our inventory. Find a quiet area where you have an opportunity to write without interruptions. When safety or privacy is a concern, we write our inventory and keep it in a secure location.

Taking an inventory reveals our history and often what lies beneath the surface. It shows us what we could not see, did not want to admit, or purposely ignored. By working Step Four, we have an opportunity to face and be free of our past. By being fearless, we discover our shortcomings and the harms we have done to others and ourselves. We use the information we uncover in our Fourth Step to work Steps Five through Nine.

Suggestions for Working Step Four

- Work with a sponsor.
- Communicate with our Higher Power asking for guidance, motivation, intuitive thought, inspiration, honesty, willingness, and open-mindedness.
- Reach out to other members for support and encouragement.
- Relax, be patient and allow the answers to come to us.

Remember

- Thinking about starting a Fourth Step is far more difficult than actually working it.
- Step Four requires action and commitment on our part.
- More will be revealed.
- We cannot get over it until we go through it.
- Remember, but not relive.

We write our inventory without fear of what we will find. For by now, we have developed a relationship with a Power greater than ourselves. We trust our Higher Power is with us every step of the way. We have faith that our Higher Power cares for us as we write. When we struggle and want to give up, we turn to our Higher Power for the strength to keep going. We remind ourselves,

God can do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. We relax and begin.

On the first page of a notebook, we write a letter to our Higher Power committing to finishing all the steps. Every day before we sit down to work on our Fourth Step, we read the letter out loud. Using whatever inventory we choose, we start to write. We work on our Fourth Step each day until we have finished.

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Fear Inventory

Working the first three Steps taught us we have no power over addicts and their behavior. A Power greater than ourselves can restore our sanity and we can make a decision to place our faith in the care of that Power.

As we write our Fourth Step, we work to improve our faith by examining the parts of our lives, both harmful and helpful. By relying on our Higher Power, this process becomes less fearful.

For many of us, we come to the Fourth Step and stop. We may find taking a thorough examination of ourselves, our characteristics - good and not so good - can keep us from starting. This reaction is common among many members, but with the help of our Higher Power, sponsor, and the encouragement of other members, we can gain the courage to take that deep dive into the pool of self-discovery. Once in the water, we find Step Four is not as difficult as we thought it would be. As we gain confidence in the process and ourselves, we become open to delving even further into self-examination.

We have many names for fear: anxiety, anguish, dread, and worry. There is the physical response we experience to an immediate danger or threat, as well as the frequent sense of dread of an unknown future. Through Nar-Anon, we listen to how other members have used the principles of recovery to face similar situations. We may learn that our wish to spare our loved ones from experiencing the consequences of their choices is an attempt to spare ourselves from the worry and fear those consequences may bring to us.

Fear and anxiety can cause many different physical, mental, emotional, and behavioral responses. For example,

- Sweating,
- increased pulse,
- quick, shallow breathing, or holding one's breath,
- changes in eating habits--too much or not enough,
- sleeplessness or too much sleep,
- lethargy or too much energy and restlessness,
- irritability,
- walking on eggshells,
- withdrawal or isolation from others or hyper-vigilance
- lack of focus or obsession with trying to control some aspect of our lives.

These responses can be harmful to our health and interfere with our relationships with others, thus depriving us of serenity.

Knowing what we fear can be challenging. Sometimes we find it hard to put our fears into words. Others may never have called it fear. Either way, we are now willing to admit our fears and their effects on our lives. We start by completing the following sentences until our fears stop coming to mind.

- I am afraid that _____.
- I am afraid of _____.

Once we have a list of our fears, we subject each fear to the following six questions.

1. Why do I have the fear; what is its source?
2. Share a story that illustrates the fear.

3. What are my physical, mental, emotional, and behavioral responses to the fear?
4. What do I do to keep the fear active and alive in my life and mind?
5. How is the fear serving me?
6. What Nar-Anon tools will I use when I feel the fear?

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Fourth Step Inventory (for Step Meetings)

Originally this inventory was developed for use in step meetings, but members also find it helpful to use on their own or with their sponsor. It divides our personality traits into debits and credits. Debits are typically behaviors that harm our relationships. Credits are actions that often help us in our effort to find serenity, sanity, and recovery. Using the worksheet, we admit to ourselves personality traits that appear in our daily lives. Rather than judging, we offer grace to ourselves by being kind and gentle. We consider what is hindering our progress and harming our relationships. We uncover what facilitates our healing and serenity.

Turning our will and our life over to the care of our Higher Power, we pause before we begin our inventory. Many members say the serenity prayer or write a prayer. Others meditate for a few minutes to settle their thoughts and find some serenity.

A member shares

I had been escorting my loved one to her recovery meetings when someone suggested I try Nar-Anon. In my first Nar-Anon meeting, I was glad to see we read the Twelve Steps, and I said so when I talked after the meeting. I was glad Nar-Anon included the addict's reading in Nar-Anon meetings to remind me what my loved one would be working on while she was in treatment. A kind Nar-Anon member explained the steps are for us. I assured him I was not an addict, just a victim of someone else's addiction. He smiled and handed me the Nar-Anon 4th Step Inventory worksheet.

The first week I checked a couple of boxes, but I knew this was a fluke. I was just upset that my loved one could not stop her addiction. In the second week, I found I had even more boxes to check. At the end of the third week, I found it necessary to go back and check some boxes I had missed in the first two weeks, and quite a few boxes in the third week. With that, I was finally ready to turn my attention to my recovery. My Nar-Anon friend then handed me a copy of the Nar-Anon step workbook. I began to change my life.

My friend did not push me to work the Steps. He allowed me to see for myself how my behaviors have a negative impact on my life.

Suggestions for Using Fourth Step Inventory (for Step Meetings)

- Find a quiet time to work without interruptions.
- Set aside a few minutes every day or a more significant block of time once a week.
- Read the list slowly and carefully.
- Reflect on each personality trait. If we use a behavior sometime during the week, we place a checkmark in the box.
- Remember, this is just an exercise in counting. We will ultimately turn our findings over to our Higher Power.
- We examine both our debits and credits identifying patterns in our behaviors.
- After four weeks we have a list of some of our characteristics.

There are multiple ways to use the Fourth Step Inventory (for Step Meetings). Each of us can discuss possibilities with a sponsor. This inventory can be completed as often as we find it valuable.

4th Step Inventory (for Step Meetings)

Although everyone has faults, it is always difficult to admit them. Thus, Step 4 is one of the most difficult steps to take. One group has found an almost painless way of achieving this end, and the results have been rewarding in the extreme.

These forms may be passed out to members for filling in every week. However, to fill in the form is only the beginning. After discussion and consideration - and a lapse of time - the forms should be brought back to the meeting and gone over again to check the improvement.

/sr

DEBITS

Week Number:	1	2	3	4
Self-pitying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resentful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Critical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suspicious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Angry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tense	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emotionally uncontrolled	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Withdrawn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jealous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fearful (afraid to assert self)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selfish, self indulgent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domineering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-righteous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stubborn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intolerant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dishonest with self	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Depressed, gloomy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smug, narrow-minded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feeling superior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expecting too much too soon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hyper-sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Despondent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sullen (silent treatment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apprehensive of future	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procrastinating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aimless and indifferent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worrisome, over-anxious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ungrateful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prone to gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Obsessed with own problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CREDITS

Week Number:	1	2	3	4
Unselfish, thoughtful of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not holding grudges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charitable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trusting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Patient	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relaxed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Calm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outgoing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loving in attitude	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generous and loving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yielding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uncritical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agreeable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forgiving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Truthful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Optimistic, cheerful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open-minded, gracious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Humble	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Realistic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Willing to admit faults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hopeful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having a sense of humor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Living 24 hours a day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being prompt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finding a purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serene	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thankful for all blessings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protecting confidence of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helpful to others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Freestyle Inventory

At times we do not know how to start working on Step Four. Rest assured, this is not an obstacle in writing a searching and fearless moral inventory, but a start. When our past is unclear, we take a different approach to explore what we do not remember or understand. This type of inventory is led by our unconscious mind and a Power greater than ourselves.

A freestyle inventory may be used for traumatic life events. Some examples are physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, fire, weather-related tragedy, loss, death, or war. In general, use this inventory style for anything that haunts us, taking one incident at a time.

Our memories may be fuzzy, so we let them come naturally. This inventory makes room for our Higher Power to reveal to us what stands in our way. Remember to keep an open mind, be flexible, and take as much time as needed. We are often surprised by what we uncover.

First we explore, searching our minds for clues. Think of it as putting the edges of a puzzle together. Inviting our Higher Power to guide us, we start writing anything that comes to us in three categories: memory, understanding, and belief. Do not worry if it seems to make no sense. More will be revealed.

Explore

- I remember. I do not remember.
- I understand. I do not understand.
- I believe. I do not believe.
- I was told. I was not told.

As the picture takes shape, we fill in the puzzle by acknowledging and listing our patterns, defense mechanisms, survival techniques, habits, coping skills, and anything else that seems relevant.

Naming our patterns of behavior brings them into the open, allowing us to take ownership and responsibility for them. If they remain buried, they control us. When we freely admit how past events shaped us, their power over us diminishes and we begin to experience freedom from their effects.

Question what we uncover

Based on this exploration, we make a list of questions about what we have uncovered.

Examine, Discern, and Connect

There is power in examining what we find. Mindfully we consider what we wrote. There is no set way to do this. Connecting the dots and putting the puzzle together may not come easily. We accept the process and trust our Higher Power and sponsor to lead the way.

- How did what was uncovered affect my life then and now?
- Who am I today because of this traumatic event?

Suggestions for the Freestyle Inventory

While writing a freestyle inventory, we go out of our way to write down whatever comes into our minds, no matter when it happens. Many times we have a random thought that seems significant, so significant we tell ourselves it will return to us the next time we work on our inventory. This is not necessarily true. Keep a notebook nearby to capture those thoughts when they come. By doing so, we avoid stuffing them back down.

The memories we are uncovering may reveal themselves as smells, sounds, tastes, feelings, or flash images. We watch for clues to show us the truth of our past using these suggestions.

- Keep an open mind.
- Be willing to find anything.
- Be kind and gentle with ourselves.
- Be patient with our progress.
- Look at old photographs.
- Ask people from our past what they remember or know.

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Peeling the Onion

Will add here when complete.

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Personal Safety Questions

Before beginning this worksheet, it is recommended that we keep it and any added writings in a safe and private place.

Chaos often accompanies addiction. Sometimes that chaos includes threats or even violence. Many of us adapted to increasing levels of chaos without fully realizing the danger it can bring. Some of us have a long history with chaos and know no other way.

Examining our lives can trigger painful memories. Others may feel threatened by us when we admit there is a problem. Expressing ourselves can escalate a precarious situation.

Sometimes we are so acclimated to a situation that we do not realize our lives have become unmanageable. Using this checklist can raise awareness. This is a personal worksheet. There are no right or wrong answers.

This worksheet has a line for each question and a column for each week. Each week we can mark the box for those questions that apply for the week. Some find it helpful to write more. As we become more aware, we may go back and change answers for prior weeks. Over time, patterns may emerge.

It may be helpful to share what we find with a trusted person such as a sponsor, fellow member, therapist, or other professional. We share only what we are ready to share.

This week....	Type	1	2	3	4
Did I feel intimidated by yelling or angry voices?	verbal				
Has anyone hit me?	physical				
Has a weapon been displayed to intimidate me?	weapon				
Has anyone verbally threatened me, a member of my family, or someone in my home?	verbal				
Have I seen anyone strike or injure a member of my family or someone in my home?	physical				
Have I seen anyone use a weapon to intimidate a member of my family or someone in my home?	weapon				
Did angry words hurt members of my family?	verbal				
Has a member of my family or someone in my home been physically injured?	physical				
Has a weapon been used to injure me or a member of my family?	weapon				
Did thoughts in my head seem threatening?	verbal				
Did I cause myself injuries that I did not want others to see?	physical				
Did anyone injure me and did I feel a need to hide those injuries?	weapon				

Did I have an argument about drugs?	verbal				
Have I, family members, or others been exposed to or at risk of injury from drugs or drug paraphernalia?	physical				
Have I been injected or dosed without my knowledge or against my will?	weapon				
Have I talked with law enforcement about a situation in my home?	verbal				
Has law enforcement been to my home?	physical				
Have I or a member of my family been served legal papers?	weapon				
Has child protective services contacted me regarding a member of my family or someone in my home?	verbal				
Has child protective services been to my home?	physical				
Have I or a member of my family been served papers by child protective services?	weapon				
Was I manipulated by criticism or angry outbursts from others?	verbal				
Did I feel anxious about me, my loved one, or someone in my household being arrested?	physical				
Did I fear that a weapon might be used against me, my loved one, or someone in my household?	weapon				
Have I had suicidal thoughts?	verbal				
Have I had homicidal thoughts?	physical				
Was I so scared that I thought I might need a weapon?	weapon				
Have I or my loved one verbally threatened to leave?	verbal				
Have I started planning in case I need to leave?	physical				
Have I applied for a restraining or protective order?	weapon				
Did I get unwanted phone calls because of my addicted loved one?	verbal				
Did I feel like someone was following me or my addicted loved one?	physical				
Has my property been damaged, stolen, or violated?	weapon				
Did I feel manipulated by my loved one's words?	verbal				
Was I pressured or manipulated to do something against my will?	physical				
Was I manipulated by threats with a weapon?	weapon				

Did someone threaten to steal from me?	verbal				
Did someone take money or break into my home?	physical				
Did someone show a weapon while demanding money or property?	weapon				

Other references

Boundaries and Consequences; Nar-Anon; 2016; https://nar-anon-webstore.myshopify.com/products/boundaries-and-consequences?_pos=1&_sid=fda0ac2dc&_ss=r&variant=18089284677

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20 Questions - Is Nar-Anon for Me?; Nar-Anon; date unknown; https://www.nar-anon.org/s/Is_NarAnon_For_Me.pdf

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Quick Inventories

It is not always necessary to inventory everything that happened in our past. Sometimes all we need to commence healing is to simply share our past experiences with another person.

- List the three worst things I have done.
- Write a list of secrets I am keeping, memories that burden me, shame I feel, remorse I have, and my regrets.

Other times healing commences when we focus on our positive traits and our program of recovery.

- Make a list of things I like about myself.
- List some program tools I have used to help get me through difficult situations.

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Relationship Inventories

We all have relationships. Some are healthy; others are holding on by a thread. When our relationships thrive, we thrive. Often, if our relationships are in shambles, so are we.

The seven unique inventories in this section assist us in finding the mistakes we have made in our relationships. With our sponsor's guidance, we choose the inventory or inventories that will be most helpful in improving our relationships.

The Slogans are the Railings to the Steps

We read in the SESH on September 7th "*The slogans are the railings we hold onto as we climb the steps.*" Hold onto the following slogans while working Step Four.

- *Let it begin with me.*
- *Water seeks its own level.*
- *Be what I want to attract.*
- *It only takes one person to change a relationship. Let it be me.*
- *Wherever I go, there I am.*

1. Relationship Inventory - Behavior

Addiction has taken its toll on us. We admitted in Step One how we contributed to the chaos in our lives. Here, we take it a step further and recognize how our behaviors harmed others.

Make a list of the people with whom our relationship is damaged, hurt, estranged, strained, or unhealthy.

We made it to Step Four by developing a relationship with a God of our understanding. We lean on our Higher Power to help us be honest and thorough. We begin by meditating or writing a prayer, asking for guidance and courage. Next, we answer the following questions for each person on our list.

1. How did I try to control them?
2. What did I do or say when I was suspicious?
3. What did I do or say when I was uncomfortable?
4. What did I do or say when I was fearful?
5. How did I enable the person or the relationship?
6. What lies did I tell myself about them or the situation?
7. Who else did I hurt?
8. What could I have done differently?

Having trouble? Look up the definition of the words: control, suspicious, uncomfortable, fearful, enable, lie, and hurt.

2. Relationship Inventory - Change

We begin by making a list of our closest relationships. When the list is complete, answer each of the following four questions.

1. What do I dislike about the relationship?
2. What do I like?
3. What would I change?
4. What can I do to improve the relationship?

After answering the questions, we ask our Higher Power to help us be the change we want to see in the relationship. We ask the God of our understanding to let the change begin with us, and to help us let go of the results.

3. Relationship Inventory – Patterns

Most of us dream of what we want in a relationship. Many of us have never found it. Instead, we often find ourselves stuck in harmful patterns. To break free of these patterns, we honestly search through our past and present relationships. Choose any of the following categories that fit the situation.

Ideal

An ideal is the concept of perfection. Describe the perfect relationship in any of the following categories: romantic, friendship, parent/child, siblings, or any others that come to mind. When finished, rewrite the ideal as a prayer. Praying daily, we ask to become the very thing we seek in others.

Attitude

Many of us discover we have developed a bad attitude towards groups of people or an individual. Either we make sweeping, negative generalizations, or see only the wrong in a person.

Attraction to a Romantic Partner

Some of us have had past experiences with romantic partners that we carry with us into new relationships. These experiences may cause us to have animosity toward those who we are attracted to. We tend to have expectations of their behavior based on our prior experiences. If this is so, write down five descriptive words or phrases to illustrate our preconceived ideas. Be honest. Do not try to sugarcoat it. We dig deep inside to find what we truly believe.

Next, we ask our Higher Power to give us five different words or phrases to replace our current perception of a romantic partner. With these five words or phrases in mind, we ask the God of our understanding to change our perception.

A member's personal example:

Current Perception: Lies, steals, messes up everything they touch, unfaithful, hurtful.

Changed Perception: Strong, Trustworthy – I can trust them like I trust God, Beacon – I can follow them, they have my best interest at heart, they have a purpose - and it is not to care just for me.

Sexuality and Gender Roles

To go deeper into our inventory, we consider our sexuality and our ideas about gender roles. We explore what we like and dislike about our sexual selves and how we express gender roles at home, in the workplace and in our daily lives.

How have I honored my sexuality?

How have I misused my sexuality?

How have I allowed gender roles to limit my possibilities?

How have I used my sexuality or gender role to manipulate or take advantage of others?

How have I allowed others to manipulate or take advantage of my gender role or sexuality?

4. Relationship Inventory - Characteristics

When we identify our shortcomings, we can also find their opposites. Becoming familiar with the principles of recovery and having the willingness to use them in our daily lives brings about the

change we seek in ourselves. Discovering the contrary actions to our character defects is sometimes the only inventory we need to help us decide.

The torture of living with active addiction sometimes makes it difficult for us to determine what actions to take in a situation. Searching for the principles we want to practice creates the clarity we seek. To use this inventory, fill in the blanks with the role I have in the relationship such as: person, man, woman, child, parent, co-worker, employee, citizen, spouse, sibling, family member, or friend.

What kind of _____ am I currently?

What kind of _____ do I want to be?

What kind of _____ does my Higher Power want me to be?

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Resentment Inventory Chart

Step Four provides us with the necessary action to keep moving forward in our recovery. Having decided to turn our will and our lives over to God's care, we invite our Higher Power to join us as we write our inventories. Remember, we are no longer alone. Feeling the pain of an injustice time and time again can be difficult. When we struggle, we lean on our sponsor and Nar-Anon friends for support and encouragement. Before we begin, we revisit our commitment letter to work the steps and move through the hurt. No matter how short the time, deciding to work on our Fourth Step daily provides the necessary stability to complete it.

Resentment reveals itself in a range of feelings: bother, grievance, grudge, anger, upset, hurt, bitterness, and pain, among others. Individual members experience hurt in different ways and these various terms help us to identify our resentments.

The questions in the chart are written in the past tense, allowing us to inventory significant events from our past, even if we think we are over them. For current resentments that trigger us and affect our everyday lives, we need only change the questions to present tense.

This inventory has six parts, A-F:

Part A: -Conscious Contact,

Part B: -Who or What Do I Resent?

Part C: -Why Am I angry?

Part D: -How Is It hurting me?

Part E: -Prayer and Meditation for others,

Part F: -See It From a Different Perspective.

Each part requires a new way of thinking. Because of this, complete Parts A, B, and C as a unit for each resentment. Then complete each of the remaining parts (D-F) for all resentments before moving on.

We each consult with our sponsor(s) as we move along to ensure our success.

We read in the SESH on September 7th "*The slogans are the railings we hold onto as we climb the steps.*" Hold onto the following phrases and slogans while working Step Four.

- When in doubt, write it out.
- When freaked out, chart it out.
- Nonetheless, I am willing.
- Let the answers come to me, not from me.
- More will be revealed.
- This too shall pass.

Prayer and contemplation help us overcome the obstacles that stand in our way of completing our inventory. Members find it helpful to read the description of each section again and again. When our emotions start to get the best of us, this rereading helps us to be objective.

A blank Resentment Inventory Chart is at the end of this chapter.

Part A – Conscious contact

Establish conscious contact with a Power greater than ourselves. Pray and meditate, then write to our Higher Power asking for assistance in writing and completing our inventory.

Part B – Who or what do I resent?

Most of us are holding on to grudges and past hurts. Perhaps we are doing so to protect ourselves or to get revenge. The next step in writing our inventory is to write down the name of the person, thing, or concept we resent.

We do not need to know the *person* to be angry with them. Nor do they need to be living.

The term *thing* is a catchall phrase. It covers just about anything that upsets us. A few examples are the significant events in our lives, the prison system, addiction, marriage, police, drugs, groups of people, politics, holidays, war, a place or location, a year, etc.

The term *concept* covers the intangible and invisible world that lives within our minds. It provides the opportunity to inventory such concepts, as greed, lust, powerlessness, more will be revealed, detachment, change, God, prayer, or other abstract ideas.

Remember, this is our inventory, and now is the time to be honest about what makes us angry.

Part C – Why am I angry?

For years many of us have complained and talked endlessly about why we were angry to no avail. To change our focus from long stories and distractions, we now use short phrases, twenty five words or less, to describe our pain and grievances. It may take some thought on our part to whittle our anger down into fewer words. However, by doing so, the resentment has less power over us.

The key to an inventory that frees us is taking time to do an honest and thorough search of what makes us angry. Knowing why we are upset is essential. We take time to discover the source of our anger by asking ourselves repeatedly why we are upset. We seek to find out what is underneath our feelings. We call this the undercurrent. An undercurrent drags us down. It is often the source of our pain but rarely acknowledged. Until we become aware of the undercurrent, it will always have power over us.

It may seem impossible to state why we are angry in twenty-five words or less. Members find the following suggestions useful. Stop and count the number of words. Be patient and organize your resentments into categories such as injustices, harms, personality flaws, inconveniences, or specific events. When the reasons for our anger are radically different, divide the resentments into categories and write additional inventories on the same person, thing, or concept.

Examples for *Why I Am Angry* using twenty-five words or less

- killing themselves with drugs, refuses to go to treatment or get clean, noncompliant with courts and probation officer
- liar, untrustworthy, does not listen to what I say, steals from me, and is irresponsible
- ignores and disrespects me, forgot my birthday, never shows up for family events, gossips
- mean and controlling, knows it all, sucks up to the boss, got an undeserved promotion
- makes bad financial decisions, unfaithful to our marriage vows, is never home, messy, leaves me to care for the kids alone
- physically hits me, verbally abuses me, abandoned me

- My house burnt down in a forest fire, and I lost all things precious to me.

After completing Parts A, B & C, for each resentment, we are now ready to answer the seven questions in Part D of the chart.

Part D – How is it hurting me?

Most of us have never taken the time to consider how our grievances affect us. In Part D, we put down our old ways of thinking and perceiving. Keeping an open mind enables us to see our pain from a new perspective.

We require help to see what is underneath our anger. The seven questions in Part D shift our attention to ourselves and away from what or whom we resent. First, determine if the answer to the question is yes or no. If the answer is yes, we explain and cite an example. If the answer is no, we disregard it and move on to the next question.

Some members find it helpful to look up the meaning of the following words which are used in the questions: lost, gained, affect, hurt, threaten, change, compromise, confidence, life, relationship, finances, security, safety, morals, and values. When we still have questions or are confused, we talk with our sponsors.

It is not necessary to answer the questions in order. Some members find it easier to jump around answering whichever order comes naturally. It is best to let the answers come from our Higher Power rather than forcing them.

We may find ourselves looking around the room, not knowing what to write. We may get restless and even more confused. This is as it should be! This way of thinking is likely foreign to us. When we get stuck we begin by re-reading our response to Part C, to see how our response relates to each question in Part D. To keep the focus on Part D, if necessary, we pause, contemplate, pray, and meditate.

After completing Part D we are now ready to move to Part E, Prayer and Meditation. We set aside time to sit quietly and pray for each person, thing, or concept we resent.

Part E – Prayer and Meditation

To end the repeated feelings of hurt and pain brought about by our grievances, we again turn to the God of our understanding. The ill will we harbored dissolves further when we pray for the person, thing, or concept we resent.

Prayer and meditation are personal conversations with a Higher Power. Some of us pray for the person to receive everything worthwhile in life: peace, joy, love, and prosperity. Others offer forgiveness. Many write a sincere prayer from their heart, asking to see the person through the eyes of their Higher Power. We can ask God to bless them and change us.

The words we use are optional. We pray for others even when we are sure it will not help, and we do not mean it. If the pain is too great and we are not ready to use the person's name, we use whatever term fits. We continue to pray each day for the person, thing, or concept until we feel a shift in our hearts. It may take weeks or months. Other times the change takes place at once. Be patient, trust the process and keep praying. In our own way, we find the willingness to ask the God of our understanding to let go and move on.

The prayer below is offered as a suggestion to free us from resentment. To evoke the power of this prayer, read it out loud, inserting in the blank space provided what or whom we resent as mentioned in Part B.

Higher Power, I acknowledge the behaviors and words of _____ disturb me. Because of this, I have not treated _____ well. If I am to be free of this resentment, I must let go. Soften my hardened heart so we can both be free once and for all. Help me to show _____ tolerance, love, patience, and understanding. Higher Power, help me to be accepting, kind, and respectful toward _____. Free me, God, from my anger. Allow me to see _____ through Your eyes. Take away my pain and hurt that I may receive the willingness to forgive _____. Higher Power, give _____ everything worthwhile in life: prosperity, joy, and peace.

Many members are more comfortable with meditation as a form of conversing with a Higher Power. One type of meditation is to quietly focus on one thing so we can ready our minds to hear from the God of our understanding. Listening to nature sounds, or music, or focusing on the breath are other ways of meditating to quiet our minds and prepare us for a change in perspective.

Upon finishing our prayer or meditation from Part E, we return to our inventory to complete Part F.

Part F – See it from a different perspective

As a coin has two sides, so do our resentments. We again lean on the power of willingness to help us complete our inventory. Now, we get an opportunity to focus on our mistakes. When tempted to point the finger and continue to discuss the wrongs others did to us, we ask Higher Power to shift our attention back to us and our behavior. After we have prayed for the person, thing, or concept, we are ready to look at it from a different perspective.

Changing our point of view can be challenging and confusing. We need assistance. Before answering the questions, some members find it helpful to look up the meaning of these words which are used in the questions: mistake, misunderstand, fear, inconsiderate, dishonest, participate, contribute, and shortcomings. When we still have questions or are confused, we talk with our sponsors.

Open-mindedness is our ally. When we are stuck and cannot admit our mistakes, we turn to the words we wrote in Part C, *Why am I angry?* for those words hold the key to uncovering our wrongs. Read what we have written in *why am I angry?* over and over and ask to see it from a new perspective. We are patient, as it may take time for our perception to shift. When we relax, the answers come to us rather than from us.

Resentment Inventory Chart

A	Write a short prayer asking for guidance and courage from my Higher Power.	
B	Name the person, thing, or concept I resent.	
C	In 25 words or less state why I am angry?	

D: How Is It Hurting Me?

		NO	YES	If yes, explain how and give an example
D1	Have I lost or gained confidence in myself?			
D2	Has it affected my life?			
D3	Has it hurt my relationships?			
D4	Have my finances been affected?			
D5	Has my emotional, mental, physical, sexual, or spiritual security or safety been threatened?			
D6	Has this changed the way others think about me?			
D7	Have my morals and values been disregarded?			

E: Prayer and Meditation

E	<p>Find a place to be quiet to pray for or meditate on the person, thing, or concept. The prayer provided here from the Nar-Anon Family Fourth Step Workbook is optional. Some choose to write their own prayer or find another prayer to use.</p>	<p><i>Higher Power, I acknowledge the behaviors and words of _____ disturb me. Because of this, I have not treated _____ well. If I am to be free of this resentment, I must let go. Soften my hardened heart so we can both be free once and for all. Help me to show _____ tolerance, love, patience, and understanding. Higher Power, help me to be accepting, kind, and respectful toward _____. Free me, God, from my anger. Allow me to see _____ through Your eyes. Take away my pain and hurt that I may receive the willingness to forgive _____. Higher Power, give _____ everything worthwhile in life: prosperity, joy, and peace.</i></p>
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F: See It From a Different Perspective

		Explain or give an example for all seven questions
F1	What mistakes did I make?	
F2	How did I misunderstand the person, thing, or concept?	
F3	What did I fear?	
F4	How was I inconsiderate?	
F5	How was I dishonest about the person, thing, or concept?	
F6	How did I participate in and contribute to keeping the resentment alive?	
F7	Identify my shortcomings.	

Reflections on Step 4

Once our Fourth Step inventory is complete, our minds open to a new way of thinking and seeing the world around us. Honesty and awareness replace self-deception. Our trust in our Higher Power and the Nar-Anon program grows. Freedom from our past becomes a reality for us. Step Four reveals our defects of character that block us from peace, joy, trust, faith, and love. We see our mistakes and are willing to correct the wrongs we uncover.

We have done a lot of work and dedicated much of our time to the completion of our Fourth Step. We pause to express the gratitude we feel for what we uncovered and celebrate the work we have done so far. Recognizing we cannot stop now, we prepare to share our inventory with our sponsor or another trusted person.

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