GUIDANCE FOR SPONSORS ON STEP 4

Once a Sponsee has completed the first three Steps in the program, it is time to start on Step 4. This can often seem a daunting undertaking and it is one of the Steps in the program where many of us falter, prevaricate and occasionally slip. The sponsor’s experience, love, support and encouragement are all the more important.

Before embarking on Step 4, it may be appropriate for sponsee and sponsor to discuss and review the boundaries around their relationship at this stage. For example, it may be that daily phone calls are no longer needed. However, it is important that the discipline of regular meetings, phone calls to the sponsor and outreach calls is maintained. It keeps the sponsee connected to the power of recovery and helps to avoid slips and relapses.

It may also be appropriate to reconsider the sponsee’s “bottom (or top) lines.” The experience of those who have worked the program suggests that it is rarely appropriate to remove bottom lines at this stage. However that is not to say it isn’t; every person and situation is different. Discussion between sponsor and sponsee and connection with your Higher Power will guide you. More often, it may be appropriate to discuss adding or changing the behaviours in their bottom lines as the sponsee changes their addictive patterns.

It is also possible that it might be appropriate or helpful for there to be “top lines” for the sponsee to work on. Top lines are positive, affirming behaviours and actions. They might include such things as doing something for fun, such as listening to music, taking exercise, or taking part in a regular spiritual practice. Let your Higher Power be your guide on this.

Step 4 should be worked following the Step 4 Guidelines contained in this booklet. The sponsee should be asked to read the following before commencing their inventory:

- Pages 64 to 71 in the AA ‘Big Book’ (4th Edition)
- Step 4 in the ‘Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions’
- Step 4 in the SLAA ‘Basic Text’
- SLAA HOW Guidance for Sponsees on Step 4 below in this document.

Before starting work, sponsor and sponsee should meet (if possible) or speak so that the sponsor can explain the guidelines and how to complete the inventory and deal with any questions.

The inventory should be written and completed as suggested in chapter 5 of the AA ‘Big Book.’ The sponsee should use the same or a similar format to the tables provided below. The separate tables should be used for resentments, fears, sexual conduct and harms.

It is suggested that a date be set for the fifth Step before starting the fourth Step so that there is a deadline in place, even if that deadline is subsequently moved. Whatever is agreed, the sponsor should guide and support the sponsee as they are working through the inventory.

Regular check-ins are suggested to review progress and to check that the sponsee is completing the inventory as suggested. Above all, it is important that forward progress is made on this step and that it is completed as quickly as is possible. The experience of those who have worked the program is that it is easy to get stuck, let things slip (or to have a slip!) at this time.
FOURTH STEP INVENTORY GUIDANCE FOR SPONSEES

Buy paper and pen and start writing. The AA ‘Big Book’ says on eight different occasions that we write out Step Four. It is the writing it down that helps trigger the release. (Typing it out is also acceptable – the power comes in the brain formulating the words and seeing them take shape on the page).

It has been our experience that when we stop acting out the problems that were actually caused by the sex and love addiction will disappear. Which leaves us with the problems that caused us to act out. And these, as you are may be beginning to find out are the ones that stay painfully with us unless we do something about it. In the past they were so painful that we needed something to relieve the pain, and we do not have to guess what the pain reliever was.

We seemed to always be able to stop acting out for a time, we just couldn’t stay stopped and then our lives would again become unmanageable. In taking Steps 4 through 9, we will be doing certain things which we find will bring us to a point of greater contentment and comfort so that we no longer need to act out to relieve the pain because the pain has lessened. It has been our experience that it really does not matter what your intention or attitude is when you take Step Four, or what your ideas are as to what it will do for you and how. What matters is that you take the steps honestly and to the best of your ability. Stop rationalising that you’ll take the Step better if you take it later or after you’ve been in program a little longer or any of the other excuses that all of us who have gone before you have tried!

As Sex and Love Addicts, we all want to excel really excel at some activity or other. A thorough 4th and 5th Step may well bring you great relief and comfort. It can lead to a real joy in living something that you may not have experienced for a long time, if ever, something that you have been searching for but couldn’t find.

Step 2 does not say, “Came to believe in a Power greater than ourselves,” but “Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves” could help us become sane, happy people. For instance, the group is greater than we are as individuals which makes it a Higher Power.

Whatever you look to as a Higher Power, you must remember that in Step 3 you turn not just your sex and love addiction, but your will and your life over to the Higher Power. So that whatever is uncovered in the process of taking Steps 4 and 5 whatever your difficulty remember that you have turned it over. It’s not yours to worry or fret about anymore. Just keep writing.

Let us stress you are not being graded on spelling, punctuation or grammar. This 4th Step is for your eyes only. You’re going to tell it to someone, but this document is for you. If you feel the urge to erase something try not to — it might be one of the keys that would unlock some part of your personality that is now hidden from you. And remember, you can’t make a perfect inventory, but you can do your best. The AA ‘Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions’ state: “Creation gave us instincts for a purpose. Without them we wouldn’t be complete human beings. If men and women didn’t exert themselves to be secure in their persons, made no effort to harvest food or construct shelter, there would be no survival. If they didn’t reproduce, the earth couldn’t be populated. If there were no social instinct, if [people] cared nothing for the society of one another, there would be no society. So these desires for the sex relation, for material and emotional security, and for companionship are perfectly necessary and right, and surely God-given.” (‘AA Twelve and Twelve’, page 46)

It is when these instincts are warped and bent out of shape that we get into trouble, for this distortion brings pain. Acting out helped to obliterate such pain. And this is what your inventory is about helping you to recognise those instincts that are warped and out of control, and to develop awareness of yourself and your reactions.

Try not to tear up any part of your inventory. If you feel the statement you made is wrong, make a note as to why it is wrong. Promise yourself to be honest and fearless.

Trust us when we tell you that your rewards will be great. Some people have been discouraged in taking an inventory, because they don’t feel they have become honest enough, or can’t remember everything that happened to them. Just do your honest best.
Do the same about memory. No-one is capable of remembering every incident of their lives, so write down what you can remember. Now.

“We went back through our lives. Nothing counted but thoroughness and honesty.” (AA ‘Big Book’ page 65). Many have found that it helps to carry around a pocket notebook so that they could jot down anything that pops into their head. Just get it down. Arrange to have a safe place to put your 4th Step Inventory. Nothing should be left out because “someone might see it who isn’t supposed to.” Remember, in Step 4 we put down all the things that we wince at just remembering them, we screw our eyes closed and think “Oh no not that.” Just write it down. It is not hurting anyone but you.

Read what the AA ‘Big Book’ has to say about the 4th Step (pages 64–71) and the ‘AA Twelve and Twelve’ (pages 43–45), and also the SLAA handbook (pages 79–81).

The AA ‘Big Book’ refers to “wreckage of your past.” From this we are tempted to deal only with the problems left in the wake of our sex and love addiction. The problems outside of us. The problems that were created as the result of our sex and love addiction. But Steps 4 and 5 deal with how the past has affected our world within. How our negative feelings about ourselves and others have affected us spiritually, mentally and physically. The AA ‘Big Book’ instructs us to write about our fears, resentments and our harms done due to sexual misbehaviour and other damaging behaviours.

Our inventory is therefore split into these four parts: Review of Resentments; Review of Fears; Review of My Own Sex Conduct; and Review of Harms Other Than Sexual. As you answer the questions for each part, write the appropriate data in the first two columns of the relevant review. For instance, if I have a resentment against my neighbour for playing loud music, write “neighbour” in column 1 of Review of Resentments, and “plays loud music” in column two.

Do not move on to the final three columns until you have completed your entire inventory. The questions are merely a mechanism for triggering the relevant information. They are not exhaustive.

Thoroughness is the watchword when taking inventory. In this connection, we write it out to get clear thinking and an honest appraisal. It is our first tangible evidence of our complete willingness to move forward.

**A FINAL WORD ON STEP 4**

Please try to stop telling yourself that you need to get in the right mood to take this Step. You are in the right mood to take this Step when you are ready to stop hurting and you want to get well. All of our lives, we have tried to “think our way into right action.” This time, we must “act our way into right thinking.” We who have taken this Step can tell you that it works.

We did not know how it worked before we took it and we cannot tell you how it works after we took it, so stop worrying about that.

What you are seeking is not mere “relief” (you will get that, don’t worry). What will come will be a real joy in living.

Believe us, you can get it, and a giant step toward getting it is to dump the accumulated garbage that you are now carrying around. So, get your pen and paper and begin!

If you honestly do not know the answer to a question, then just indicate that you do not know. But, try and answer each question the best way that you can. And remember, if any question suggests an area of discomfort or trouble, then write it out get it down on paper get rid of it!
THE HOW 4TH STEP INVENTORY

PROMPTS FOR RESENTMENTS

01 If your parents fought/fight, did/do you resent it?
02 List all the feelings of resentment you had/have toward your parents.
03 Did/do you resent your status in the family? (i.e. only child, youngest child, oldest child, twin etc.)
04 Try to remember each successive grade/year in school and as you do, write out the resentments you felt towards teachers, pupils, anyone. Any fights, slights, hurts, embarrassments.
05 Did/do you resent your church, relatives, friends of parents, parents? If so list them. No resentment is too small to mention.
06 Did you resent leaders, either physical or mental leaders? Did you resent not being the most handsome or beautiful person at school?
07 Did you resent not being a part of a crowd? Or not being a leader? Or not being "in"?
08 Did/do your parents compare you to other family members or friends? Did/do you resent them for wanting you to be like someone else?
09 Do you resent the responsibilities of marriage and family?
10 Do you feel that the world owes you a living?
11 If revenge were possible right now, who would be the top people on your list? Why?
12 In business relationships, write out your resentments toward bosses and co-workers. Do you feel jealous of them? List all the negative feelings you have about the people involved in your work life.
13 If you are divorced or getting divorced, write out any resentments about the situation and the people involved, fears and guilt concerning your relationship with your spouse and your children.
14 What resentments or hates do you still have?
15 Do you feel resentment towards another HOW member?
16 Do you argue with people? Is it important for you to be "right"? Do you become angry when people don't see things the way you do?
17 Do you resent others who don't seem to have problems finding happiness?
18 Do you resent people who can act around sex and love in ways that you can't?
19 Are you hostile because you don't like the hand life has dealt you?

PROMPTS FOR FEARS

01 Were you threatened by the bogeyman or the devil, etc? If so, what are your fears in this regard?
02 Were you afraid of the dark?
03 How do you react to conflict?
04 If your parents fought/fight, did/does it scare you?
05 Were you afraid of storms?
06 List all the feelings of fear you had toward each person in your life as a child. If any of these fears remain, add them to your list.

07 Do you fear any particular type of person?

08 What is your greatest fear?

09 Are you afraid of being sexually rejected?

10 If you are divorced or getting divorced, write out any fears about the situation and the people involved.

11 Are you afraid of getting too close to another person for fear of being rejected?

12 Are you a tightwad? What are your fears concerning money? Do you spend with no ‘thought of tomorrow’?

13 What kind of things do you waste most time worrying about: the future or the past?

14 What are your present fears? List them.

15 Did fear and inferiority about fitness for your job destroy your confidence and fill you with conflict?

PROMPTS FOR OWN SEX CONDUCT

01 If you got someone pregnant or became pregnant yourself, what did you do and how did you feel about your actions? List any harms done to others.

02 When, how and in just what instances did my selfish pursuit of sex relations damage other people and me? What people were hurt and how badly? Did I spoil my marriage and injure my children? Did I jeopardise my standing in the community? Did I insist that I was the pursued and not the pursuer, and thus absolve myself?

03 How have I reacted to frustration in sexual matters? When denied, did I become vengeful or depressed? Did I take it out on other people?

04 If there was rejection or coldness at home, did I use this as a reason for promiscuity?

05 Do you use sex as a punishment or reward? Are you careless of your partners feelings?

06 Write on all sexual experiences not previously discussed, especially those which made you feel uncomfortable.

07 Do you engage in sex in order to build your own ego by a feeling of conquest?

08 Are you involved in a love affair that could bring yourself or others harm?

PROMPTS FOR HARMs OTHER THAN SEXUAL

01 List the first time you ever stole anything. Inventory all your thefts.

02 Were you a troublemaker? If so, in what way? Did you destroy property?

03 What kind of lies did you tell? If people were hurt as a result, list them on your review of harms other than sexual.

04 Were you undependable as a friend: breaking off relationships without any explanation when something or someone who seemed better came along?

05 Did you pit one member of your family against another?
06 If you have married a cold, unloving person, ask yourself why you chose that one to be your mate? Did you use it as an excuse to find new romances? Was your mother or father cold and unloving and is this your chance to get even with them through your spouse?

07 Do you write bad cheques (or make transfers without sufficient funds)?

08 Do you gossip about others?

09 Do you use people to get what you want? Do you gossip or perform “character assassination” on another in order to “make it” in the social or business world? Or do you do this in an effort to feel superior to the one gossiped about?

10 If you are a thief, what have you stolen? Don’t forget to include employers’ time and harmonious relationships that you had and that you destroyed.

11 Do you have a pattern of getting sick? Be honest. Do you use illness as an excuse to avoid responsibilities or get attention or sympathy or to get out of a jam?

12 If you are divorced or getting divorced, write out any guilts about the situation and the people involved. What harm have you caused?

13 Do you pad your expense account or use food allowances to buy things just for yourself?

14 What kind of things do you lie about the most?

15 Do you find yourself punishing your children for the wrong reasons? List the harms you have done to your children.

16 Are you cold and indifferent to your family, friends, work, your own needs?

17 Do you threaten others by saying that you can’t maintain bottom-line sobriety if you don’t get your family back, your own way, etc?

18 Do you pass along gossip or make up things about other people’s behaviour?

19 Did I have such unprincipled ambition that I double-crossed and undercut my associates?

20 Was I extravagant? Did I recklessly borrow money, caring little whether it was repaid or not? Was I a penny-pincher, refusing to support my family properly?

The most common symptoms of emotional insecurity are worry, anger, self-pity and depression. These stem from causes which sometimes seem to be within us, and at other times come from without. To take inventory in this respect, we ought to consider carefully all personal relationships which bring continuous and recurring trouble. It should be remembered that this kind of insecurity may arise in any area where instincts are threatened. Questions directed to this kind of insecurity in order to find answers for your inventory might run like this:

• Looking at both past and present, what sex situations have caused me anxiety, bitterness, frustration, anger, or depression?
• Appraising each situation fairly, can I see where I have been at fault?
• Did these perplexities beset me because of selfishness or unreasonable demands?
• Or, if my disturbance was seemingly caused by the behaviour of others, why do I lack the ability to accept conditions I cannot change?

These are the sort of fundamental inquiries that can disclose the source of my discomfort and indicate whether I may be able to alter my own conduct and so adjust myself serenely to self-discipline.

Suppose that financial insecurity constantly arouses these same feelings. I can ask myself to what extent have my own mistakes fed my gnawing anxieties, and if the actions of others are part of the cause, what can I do about that? If I am unable to change the present state of affairs, am I willing to take the measures necessary to shape my life to conditions as they are?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Because</th>
<th>Affects my</th>
<th>My Part</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resentment</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. **Column 1: Resentment**
   - List all people, places, things, institutions, ideas or principles with whom I am angry, resent, feel hurt or threatened by. (Include your addiction and yourself.)

2. **Column 2: Strength & Duration**
   - Indicate in column one both the Strength (S 1-10) and Duration (D 1-10) of the Resentment.
     - S: Does it burn with heat of a thousand suns (10)? Or would it just tickle your ear (1)?
     - D: Does it say good night to you and greet you in the morning (10)? Or does it just pop into your mind now and then (1)?

3. **Column 3: Affects my…**
   - How did it make me feel? Specifically, how did it affect the seven parts of self?
     - P - Pride
     - SE - Self-esteem
     - PR - Personal relations
     - SR - Sexual relations
     - A - Ambitions
     - S - Security
     - F - Finances

4. **Column 4: My Part**
   - What did I do, if anything, to set in motion trains of circumstances which in turn caused people or institutions to hurt me and eventually led to my resentment of them for doing so? What's the truth here? Where was my responsibility in this relationship? What might I have done differently? Where was I at fault?
     - S - Selfishness
     - D - Dishonesty
     - SSF - Self-seeking / Frightened
     - I - Inconsiderate
     - Include other character defects.

Find more resources at: [https://augustinerecovery.org/sponsorship](https://augustinerecovery.org/sponsorship)
I Resent

This affects my

My part - what did I do?

My part - where was I to blame?

Because

Complete this online & more resources at - https://augustinerecovery.org/sponsorship

Character Defects

List or describe the character defects involved. Refer to the common defects table.

I - Inconsiderate

Frightened

SSF - Self-seeking/

D - Dishonest

S - Selfish

What mistakes have I made? Where was I at fault?

What is the truth here? Where was I responsible in this relationship?

Effort (scale of 1 - 10)?

Duration? (scale of 1 - 10)?

Strength (scale of 1 - 10)?

Does it burn with heat of a thousand suns (10)?

Or does it just tickle your ear (1)?

How did it make me feel? Specifically, how did it affect the seven parts of self?

P - Pride

SE - Self-esteem

A - Ambitions

PR - Personal Relations

SR - Sexual Relations

S - Security

F - Finances

S - Security

PR - Personal Relations

Duration (scale of 1 - 10)?

Effort (scale of 1 - 10)?

S - Self-esteem

P - Pride

Effort (scale of 1 - 10)?

Duration (scale of 1 - 10)?

Strength (scale of 1 - 10)?

Because

List or describe the character defects involved. Refer to the common defects table.

I list people, myself, institutions, addictions, ideas or principles with whom I am angry, resent, feel hurt or threatened by. Complete one page per resentment. Write on back if needed.

Putting out of mind the wrongs others have done, I resolutely look for my own mistakes.

What did I do, if anything, to set in motion trains of circumstances, which in turn caused people or institutions to hurt me and eventually led to my resentment of them for doing so?

What's the truth here? Where was my responsibility in this relationship?

What might I have done instead? Where was I at fault?

What happened? Be specific as to why I was wounded or angry.

People or institutions to whom I am emotionally tied by my commitment of time, love or money?

People, places, situations, or ideas which in turn caused me to think or act in ways I from my current perspective now consider unhelpful or unhealthy?

In what ways has this resentment led me to act in unhealthy ways?

Does this resentment still affect me today?

Because
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fear</th>
<th>Because Why?</th>
<th>Affects my</th>
<th>My Part What did I do to set the ball rolling, and set in motion trains of circumstances which have led to this? In other words, and in the light of my present set of circumstances, which character defects caused me to do what I did, or cause me to want to hold on to the fear, even though I may have done nothing to cause it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Column 1: Fear
List all people, places, things, institutions, ideas or principles that I fear. Include relapse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- S: Does it burn with heat of a thousand suns (10)? Or would it just tickle your ear (1)?
- D: Does it say good night to you and greet you in the morning (10)? Or does it just pop into your mind now and then (1)?

Column 2: Because
What are they going to do to me? Will I be hurt? Am I going to lose my job, a relationship, money? Am I going to prison? Will I lose face?

Column 3: Affects my
On my fears list, I set opposite each name the part of self that is affected or threatened.

- P - Pride
- SE - Self-esteem
- PR - Personal relations
- SR - Sexual relations
- A - Ambitions
- S - Security
- F - Finances

Column 4: My Part
Putting out of mind the wrongs others have done, I resolutely look for my own mistakes. What did I do (if anything) to set the ball rolling, and set in motion trains of circumstances which have led to my being in the position to have the fear? Which character defects caused me to do what I did, or cause me to want to hold on to the old fear, even though I may have done nothing to cause it?

- S - Selfishness
- D - Dishonesty
- SSF - Self-seeking/Frightened
- I - Inconsiderate

Add your own character defects to this list...
I Fear
This affects my

My part - what did I do?

Putting all the wrongs others have done I learned by doctoring our mistakes

My part - where was I to blame?

Putting all the wrongs others have done I learned by doctoring our mistakes

Because

Circumstances which have led my being in the position to have the fear

What did I do?

List or describe the character defects involved. Refer to the common defects table.

Character Defects

| S | Selfish |
| D | Dishonest |
| SSF | Self-seeking / Frightened |
| F | Finances |
| S | Security |
| SR | Sexual Relations |
| PR | Personal Relations |
| A | Ambitions |
| SE | Self-esteem |
| P | Pride |

How it affects me:

How did it make me feel? Specifically, how did it affect the seven parts of self?

P - Pride
SE - Self-esteem
A - Ambitions
SR - Sexual Relations
PR - Personal Relations
S - Security
F - Finances

Duration (scale of 1 - 10)?

Strength (scale of 1 - 10)?

Does it say good night and greet you in the morning (10)?

Or does it just pop into your mind now and then (1)?

Or would it just tickle your ear (1)?

Or does it burn with heat of a thousand suns (10)?

Or does it say good night and greet you in the morning (10)?

What are they going to do to me? Will I be hurt? Am I going to lose my job, a relationship, money? Am I going to prison? Will I lose face?

List or describe the character defects involved. Refer to the common defects table.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harms/Hurts</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Affects my…</th>
<th>My Part - what did I do?</th>
<th>What should I have done instead?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Column 1:</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Column 5:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
I Hurt

Nature of the harm

My part - what did I do?

What feelings did I create in others? Did I arouse jealousy, suspicion, or bitterness, anger, desire to retaliate, fear, etc.?

My part - what should I have done instead?

List by name the people or group of people that I harmed by my acting out.

Complete one page per harm. Include yourself. List in order, identifying people by character defects.

Complete this online & more resources at - https://augustinerecovery.org/sponsorship

Character Defects

List or describe the character defects involved. Refer to the common defects table.

My part - where was I to blame?

1 - Inconsiderate
2 - Dishonest
3 - Self-seeking

Sex instinct -

The security instinct or the sex instinct

Social instinct -

Which part of self caused me to do what I did? Was it caused by the social instinct, the security instinct or the sex instinct?

Which part of self caused me to behave the way I did?

This affects my

Sex

Social

Security

Other instinc

Description

What did I do to cause harm?

Nature of the harm

[ ] Other

[ ] Sexual

[ ] I hurt

My part - what did I do instead?

List by name the people or group of people that I harmed by my acting out.

Complete this online & more resources at - https://augustinerecovery.org/sponsorship
GUIDANCE FOR SPONSORS ON STEP 5

Before commencing this Step, the sponsee should be asked to read the following:

- Pages 72 to 75 in the AA Big Book (4th Edition)
- Step 5 in the SLAA Basic Text
- Step 5 in the ‘Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions’

It is up the sponsee to decide with whom they wish to take this Step. It is common to do it with a sponsor, but this is not a requirement. The sponsee may choose a therapist, a member of the clergy or a close friend. As sponsor, you can help your sponsee make this choice, referring to the literature and seeking guidance from your Higher Power. Whatever your sponsee’s choice, this should be respected. They are choosing someone with whom they feel safe to make themselves vulnerable and to share some of their innermost secrets, perhaps things that they have not felt able to share with anyone else. They are placing great trust and confidence in that person.

If that person is you, it is crucial that you respect that confidence. Sponsors who hear a Step 5 must ensure that the information they obtain is kept confidential between them and their sponsee and is not revealed to anyone, ever, unless the sponsee agrees.

Step 5 can be an uplifting and healing process. It can also be a tiring and emotional experience for both parties. Many SLAA members have found it helpful to take this Step in a few separate sessions rather than trying to do it all at once. However, the choice of how to do it lies between sponsor and sponsee and it is important to complete this Step without undue delay. A sponsor therefore needs to be available as much as reasonably possible to go through and hear this Step with the sponsee.

The sponsor’s role when hearing a Step 5 is mainly to listen. Remember, you are not a parent, therapist or confessor. However, you might, at appropriate times, share your own experience strength and hope. For example, telling the sponsee “I’ve done that too”, or “That’s exactly the way I felt” if it might help them in revealing things they find embarrassing. However, you should avoid trading “war stories” or embarking on your own Step 5. This is the sponsee’s inventory and they need to be given the time and space to share it.

Occasionally, during a Step 5, it might become clear that the sponsee has not completed their Step 4 inventory or has completed it, or part of it, incorrectly. If that happens then you should suggest that they go back to Step 4 and complete the inventory, or the relevant part, before carrying on with Step 5.

Once the sponsee has completed reading out their inventory — often after many hours — they should read page 75 in the Big Book. As recommended there, they should find somewhere where they can be quiet for an hour and reflect on the Steps they have taken so far. Your sponsee has just taken a significant Step in their recovery.

You might feel it appropriate to share how you felt after taking the step and let them know that it can affect different people in different ways. Let them know that it may take a few days, or longer, for them fully to process the effects of Step 5.

After completing Step 5, take some time for solitary prayer and meditation.

01 What did it feel like to say out loud your inventory?
02 Was there a particular part of your body where this feeling was the strongest?
03 When you noted the character defects or defences as part of your Step 4, were there particular items that recurred more than others? Compiling these into a ‘word map’ might aid your work in Step 6 and 7.
04 Is there anything that you were too ashamed to share?
   If yes, how could holding something back eventually result in leading a compartmentalised life again?