

The Twelve Stepsa spiritual journey of recovery

STEP FOUR: Constructive Sorrow

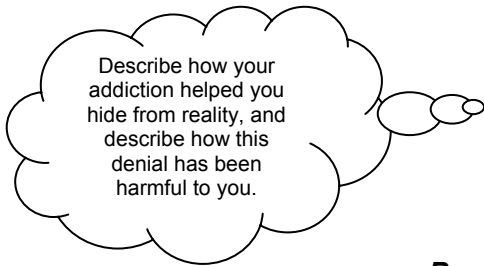
Review:

Step One – is about recognizing our brokenness. We admitted we were powerless over the effects of our separation from God – that our lives had become unmanageable.

Step Two – is about the birth of faith in us. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

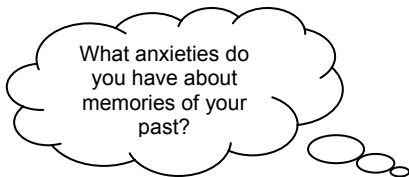
Step Three – is about a turning point. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God.

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



Lamentations 3:40 *“Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord.”*

Psalm 138:23–24 *“Search me, O God, and know my heart, test my thoughts. Point out anything you find in me that makes you sad.”*



God, help me list the things I’ve done that I feel badly about

- My Sins
- Transgressions
- Hurt I’ve caused
- People I haven’t forgiven

God, help me list the Resentments and Guilt of my life.

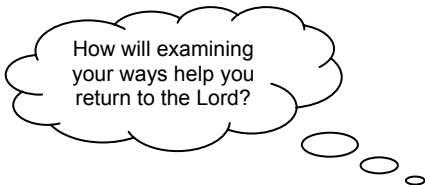
- Who and what do I resent?
- What do I feel guilty about?

Mismanaged guilt:

- destroys our confidence
- damages our relationships
- demands our fixation on the past

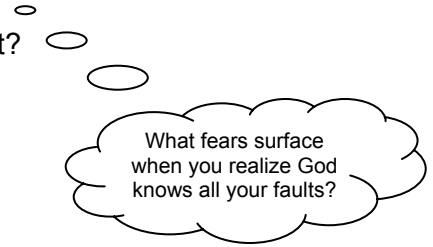
Properly managed guilt brings freedom and release.

“The cross we carry is never so heavy as the chains from which we were freed” by JA Lacy



God, help me list the sources of pain, anger, and fear in my life

- What have I done that I'm hiding?
- What don't I want people to find out about?
- Which of my past and current behaviors do I feel shameful about?
- What are my addictions, faults, and unhealthy ways for dealing with stress, fear, anxiety and pain?



Maintain awareness of God's complete grace and forgiveness throughout this Step

Isaiah 1:19 "No matter how deep the stain of your sins, I can take it out and make you clean as freshly fallen snow."

How do we take this step?

1. Prayer
"Search me O God, and know my heart. Test my thoughts, point out anything you find in me that makes you sad." Psalm 139:23-24
2. Inventory (or Journal)
Write out your guilt, your regrets and your sorrow regarding the choices that were wrong and harmful. (for help with this, pick up an INVENTORY sheet on the resource table).
3. Honest Confession
"If we confess our sins to Him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong." 1 John 1:9

Life Recovery Bible.....scripture and helpful reflections on this Step

Galatians 6: 3-5	Psalm 139:23-24
James 1: 19-21	1 John 4:18
2 Corinthians 13: 5-6	Ephesians 4:31
James 1: 12	Colossians 3: 5-8
Genesis 3:6-13	Nehemiah 8:7-10
Nehemiah 9:1-3	Nehemiah 9:34-38
Matthew 7:1-5	2 Corinthians 7:8-11
Revelation 20:11-15	

MY MORAL INVENTORY

What wrong-doing, harm or hurt have I caused?	The Effect...How has this impacted me, & others?
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	
What resentments do I have toward others?	The Effect...How has this impacted me, & others?
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	
What faults, habits and secrets do I hide?	The Effect...How has this impacted me, and others?
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	

Carry On

It's easy to fight when everything's right,
 And you're mad with the thrill and the glory;
 It's easy to cheer when victory's near,
 And wallow in fields that are gory.
 It's a different song when everything's wrong.
 When you're feeling infernally mortal;
 When it's ten against one, and hope there is none,
 Buck up, little soldier, and chortle:

Carry on! Carry on!
There isn't much punch in your blow.
You're glaring and staring and hitting out blind;
You're muddy and bloody, but never mind.
Carry on! Carry on!
You haven't the ghost of a show.
It's looking like death, but while you've a breath,
Carry on! Carry on!

And so in the strife of the battle of life
 It's easy to fight when you're winning;
 It's easy to slave, and starve and be brave,
 When the dawn of success is beginning.
 But the man who can meet despair and defeat
 With a cheer, there's a man of God's choosing;
 The man who can fight to Heaven's own height
 Is the man who can fight when he's losing.
Carry on! Carry on!
Things never were looming so black.
But show that you haven't a cowardly streak,
And though you're unlucky you never are weak.
Carry on! Carry on!
Brace up for another attack.
It's looking like hell, but - you never can tell:
Carry on, old man! Carry on!

There are some who drift out in the deserts of doubt,
 And some who in brutishness wallow;
 There are others, I know, who in piety go
 Because of a Heaven to follow.
 But to labour with zest, and to give it your best,
 For the sweetness and joy of the giving;
 To help folks along with a hand and a song;
 Why, there's the real sunshine of living.

Carry on! Carry on!
Fight the good fight and true;
Believe in your mission, greet life with a cheer;
There's big work to do, and that's why you are here.
Carry on! Carry on!
Let the world be the better for you;
And at last when you die, let this be your cry:
Carry on, my soul! Carry on!

Robert W. Service