

The Power of Four

Made a searching and fearless and moral inventory of ourselves.

I love the twelve steps. They have the power to change lives when worked properly: fearlessly and thoroughly. I like to call steps four through nine the “miracle steps”. This is where we begin to get rid of self and when we create that space God can enter into it. It is my opinion that this is where the spiritual awakening occurs which is pointed out in step twelve. Having *had* a spiritual awakening, it reads, indicating that this has happened at some point before step twelve. My experience indicates to me that this happening occurs while working steps four through nine. These are my very favorite steps for this reason.

Now, out of those steps I would have to say that my utmost favorite steps are steps four and five. Wow, the changes that occur during these two steps! It’s indescribable. Today, I will focus on step four.

Step four, I was taught, is best done using the format in the book Alcoholics Anonymous, fondly referred to as the “Big Book” by our members. This format can be found on page 65. This format shows three columns, but a fourth column is added to answer the question posed in the middle of the third column on page 67. (Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self- seeking and frightened?) These four columns can change your life, your perspective, your attitude and your relation to God and others. Hard to believe, but it’s true.

Reviewing our lives fearlessly and thoroughly for the first time, asking ourselves what our part was and not looking at events as if we were the victim or an unfortunate looker on has a profound effect on us, our future and our relation to God and the people around us. When what we learn to do on step four is practiced on a consistent basis the change is consistent. It becomes a regular, working part of our lives and thus, the beginning in this “design for living” that we are told about in the Big Book on page 28.

“What we really have is a daily reprieve (from alcoholism) contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition. Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God’s will into all of our activities. “How can I best serve Thee-Thy will (not mine) be done.” it reads on page 85 in the Big Book. Step four, in my opinion, is the first step which begins to give us clarity on what God’s will is for us. By being diligent in “cleaning house”, we move the old garbage out. This creates room for God to move into giving us new, clear eyes with which it is easier to see Him and what He wants for us. We are given new ears with which to hear his voice.

Yes, step four is the beginning of having a “fit spiritual condition” (p. 85 Big Book) that is worthy of maintaining. Here is where we commence to put down the old man and walk with new purpose and clarity knowing who we are and where we stand with God. Trust me, it doesn’t get any better than that. Feel the power of the fourth step. Start yours today!

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