

AA Harrisburg

MONTHLY FOCUS APRIL: STEP 4 DETAIL

Step Four

“Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.”

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 wouldn't be populated. If there were no social instinct, if men 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.

Yet these instincts, so necessary for our existence, often far exceed their proper functions. Powerfully, blindly, many times subtly, they drive us, dominate us, and insist upon ruling our lives. Our desires for sex, for material and emotional security, and for an important place in society often tyrannize us. When thus out of joint, man's natural desires cause him great trouble, practically all the trouble there is. No human being, however good, is exempt from these troubles. Nearly every serious emotional problem can be seen as a case of misdirected instinct. When that happens, our great natural assets, the instincts, have turned into physical and mental liabilities.

Step Four is our vigorous and painstaking effort to discover what these liabilities in each of us have been, and are.

We want to find exactly how, when, and where our natural desires have warped us. We wish to look squarely at the unhappiness this has caused others and ourselves. By discovering what our emotional deformities are, we can move toward their correction. Without a willing and persistent effort to do this, there can be little sobriety or contentment for us. Without a searching and fearless moral inventory, most of us have found that the faith which really works in daily living is still out of reach.

(Alcoholics Anonymous World Service Inc.. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (pp. 42-43). AA World Services, Inc. Kindle Edition.)

Other Readings:

As Bill Sees It—10

Out of the Dark

Self-searching is the means by which we bring new vision, action, and grace to bear upon the dark and negative side of our natures. With it comes the development of that kind of humility that makes it possible for us to receive God's help. Yet it is only a step. We will want to go further. We will want the good that is in us all, even in the worst of us, to flower and to grow. But first of all we shall want sunlight; nothing much can grow in the dark. Meditation is our step out into the sun.

"A clear light seems to fall upon us all—when we open our eyes. Since our blindness is caused by our own defects, we must first deeply realize what they are. Constructive meditation is the first requirement for each new step in our spiritual growth."

(AA World Services Inc. As Bill Sees It. A.A. World Services, Inc. Kindle Edition.)

Daily Reflections

APRIL 3

ACCEPTING OUR HUMANNESS

We finally saw that the inventory should be ours, not the other man's. So we admitted our wrongs honestly and became willing to set these matters straight.

AS BILL SEES IT, p. 222

Why is it that the alcoholic is so unwilling to accept responsibility? I used to drink because of the things that other people did to me. Once I came to A.A. I was told to look at where I had been wrong. What did I have to do with all these different matters? When I simply accepted that I had a part in them, I was able to put it on paper and see it for what it was—humanness. I am not expected to be perfect! I have made errors before and I will make them again. To be honest about them allows me to accept them—and myself—and those with whom I had the differences; from there, recovery is just a short distance ahead.

(Alcoholics Anonymous World Service Inc.. Daily Reflections: A Book of Reflections by A.A. Members for A.A. Members . A.A. World Services, Inc.. Kindle Edition.)

As Bill Sees It—248

We Need Outside Help It was evident that a solitary self-appraisal, and the admission of our defects based upon that alone, wouldn't be nearly enough. We'd have to have outside help if we were surely to know and admit the truth about ourselves—the help of God and of another human being.

Only by discussing ourselves, holding back nothing, only by being willing to take advice and accept direction could we set foot on the road to straight thinking, solid honesty, and genuine humility.

If we are fooling ourselves, a competent adviser can see this quickly. And, as he skillfully guides us away from our fantasies, we are surprised to find that we have few of the usual urges to defend ourselves against unpleasant truths. In no other way can fear, pride, and ignorance be so readily melted. After a

time, we realize that we are standing firm on a brand-new foundation for integrity, and we gratefully credit our sponsors, whose advice pointed the way.

(AA World Services Inc. As Bill Sees It . A.A. World Services, Inc.. Kindle Edition.)

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