



*"Hello, AA? If I join, can I keep at least one resentment?"*

## 4<sup>th</sup> STEP WORKSHOP

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**For God's sake, DO NOT WORK the Steps  
TAKE the Steps let the Steps do the work**

Pedro P - Marietta, GA

What seems to be blocking us from a thorough 4<sup>th</sup> step?

FEAR?

APATHY?

GUILT & SHAME?

IMPATIENCE?

PERFECTIONISM?

MISUNDERSTANDING?



Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, which many of us had never attempted. Though our decision was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us. Our liquor was but a symptom. So we had to get down to causes and conditions.



Therefore, we started upon a personal inventory. *This was Step Four.* A business which takes no regular inventory usually goes broke. Taking a commercial inventory is a fact-finding and a fact-facing process. It is an effort to discover the truth about the stock-in-trade. One object is to disclose damaged or unsalable goods, to get rid of them promptly and without regret. If the owner of the business is to be successful, he cannot fool himself about values.



We did exactly the same thing with our lives. We took stock honestly. First, we searched out the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure. Being convinced that self, manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us, we considered its common manifestations.



Resentment is the “number one” offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have been spiritually sick. When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically. In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper. We listed people, institutions or principles with whom we were angry. We asked ourselves why we were angry. In most cases it was found that our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions, our personal relationships (including sex) were hurt or threatened. So we were sore. We were “burned up.”



On our grudge list we set opposite each name our injuries. Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal, or sex relations, which had been interfered with?

We were usually as definite as this example:

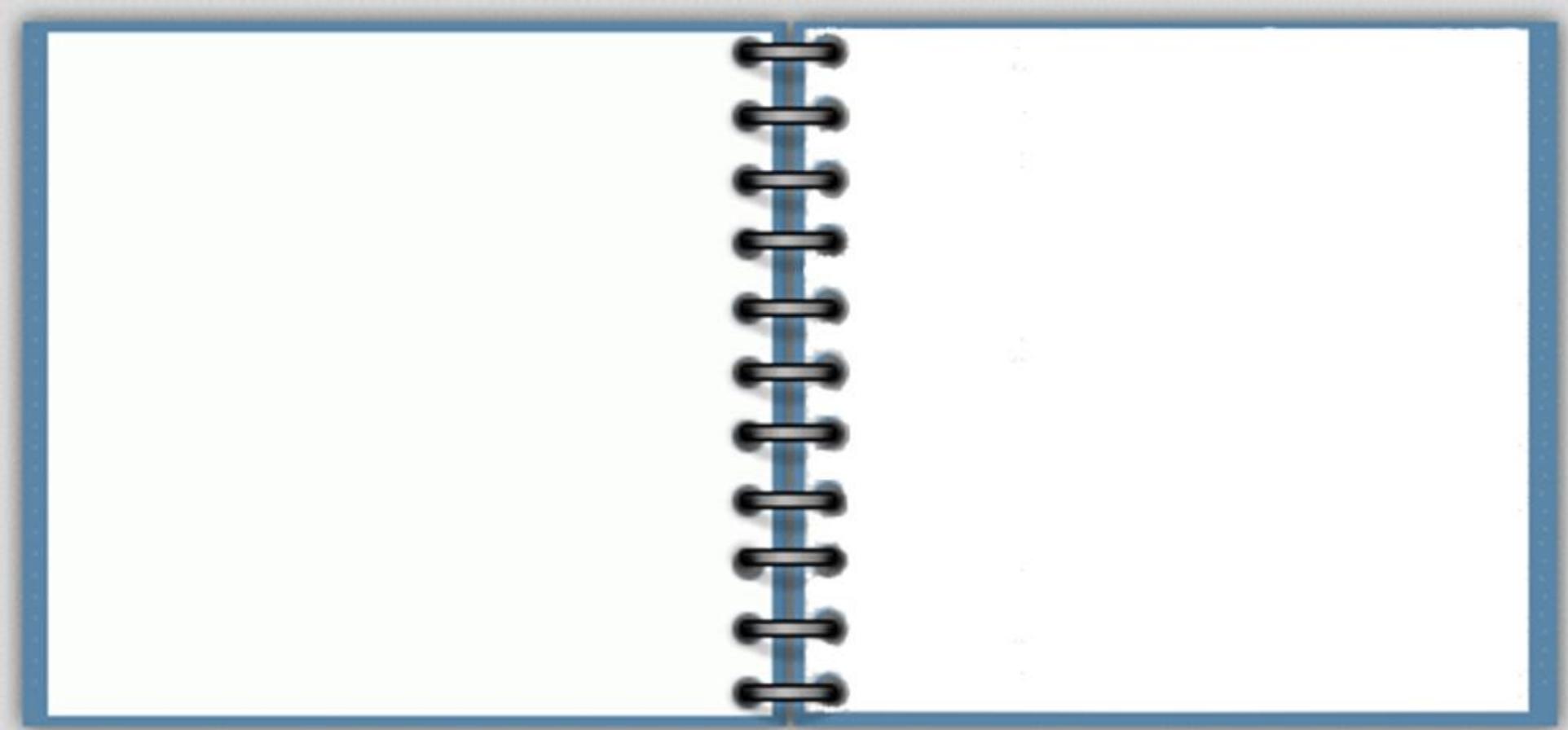
<i>I'm resentful at:</i>	<i>The Cause</i>	<i>Affects my:</i>
Mr. Brown	His attention to my wife. Told my wife of my mistress. Brown may get my job at the office.	Sex relations. Self-esteem (fear) Sex relations. Self-esteem (fear) Security.
Mrs. Jones	She's a nut - she snubbed me. She committed her husband for drinking. He's my friend She's a gossip.	Self-esteem (fear) Personal relationship. Self-esteem (fear)
My employer	Unreasonable-Unjust -Overbearing- Threatens to fire me for drinking and padding my expense account.	Self-esteem(fear) Security.
My wife	Misunderstands and nags. Likes Brown. Wants house put in her name.	Pride - Personal sex relations - Security (fear)

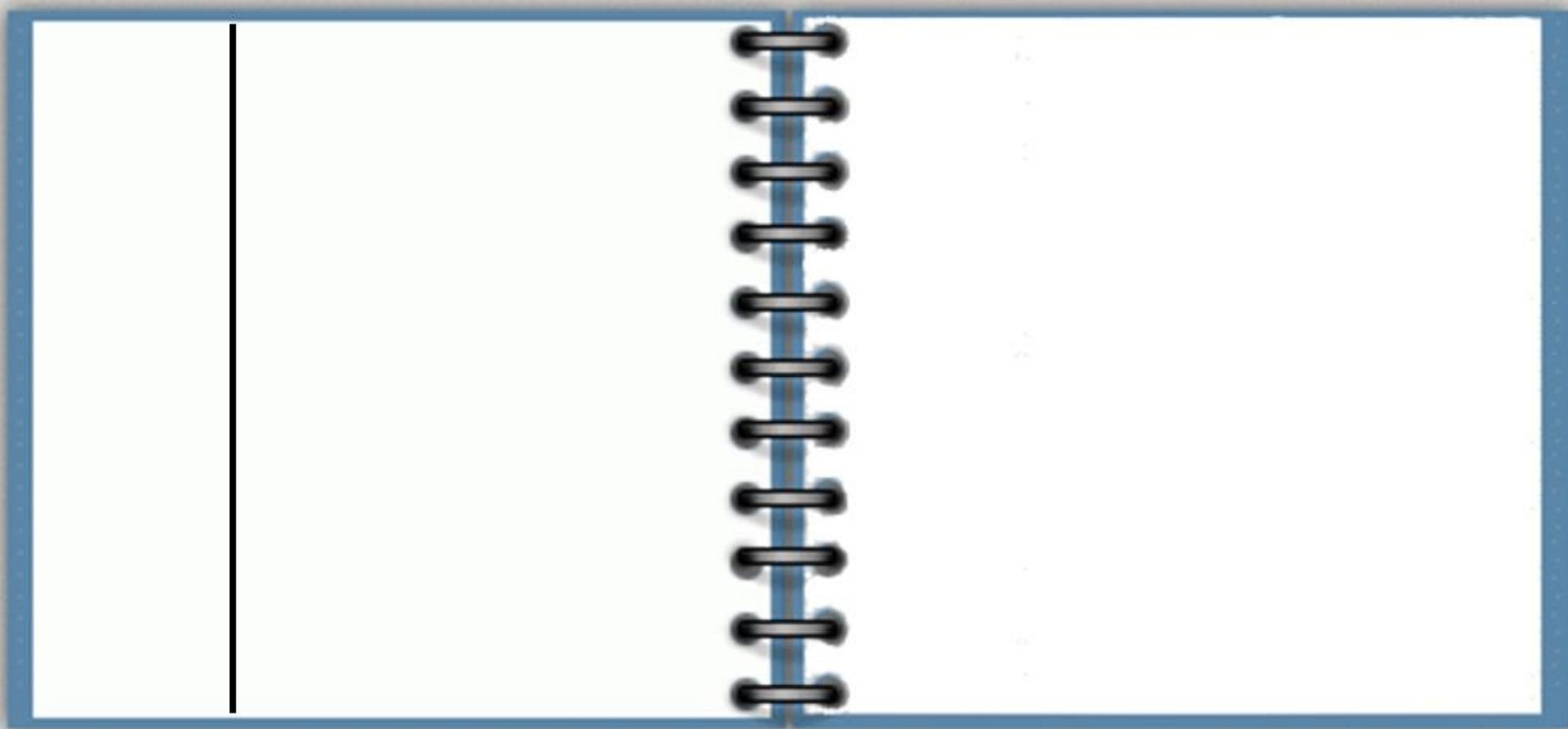


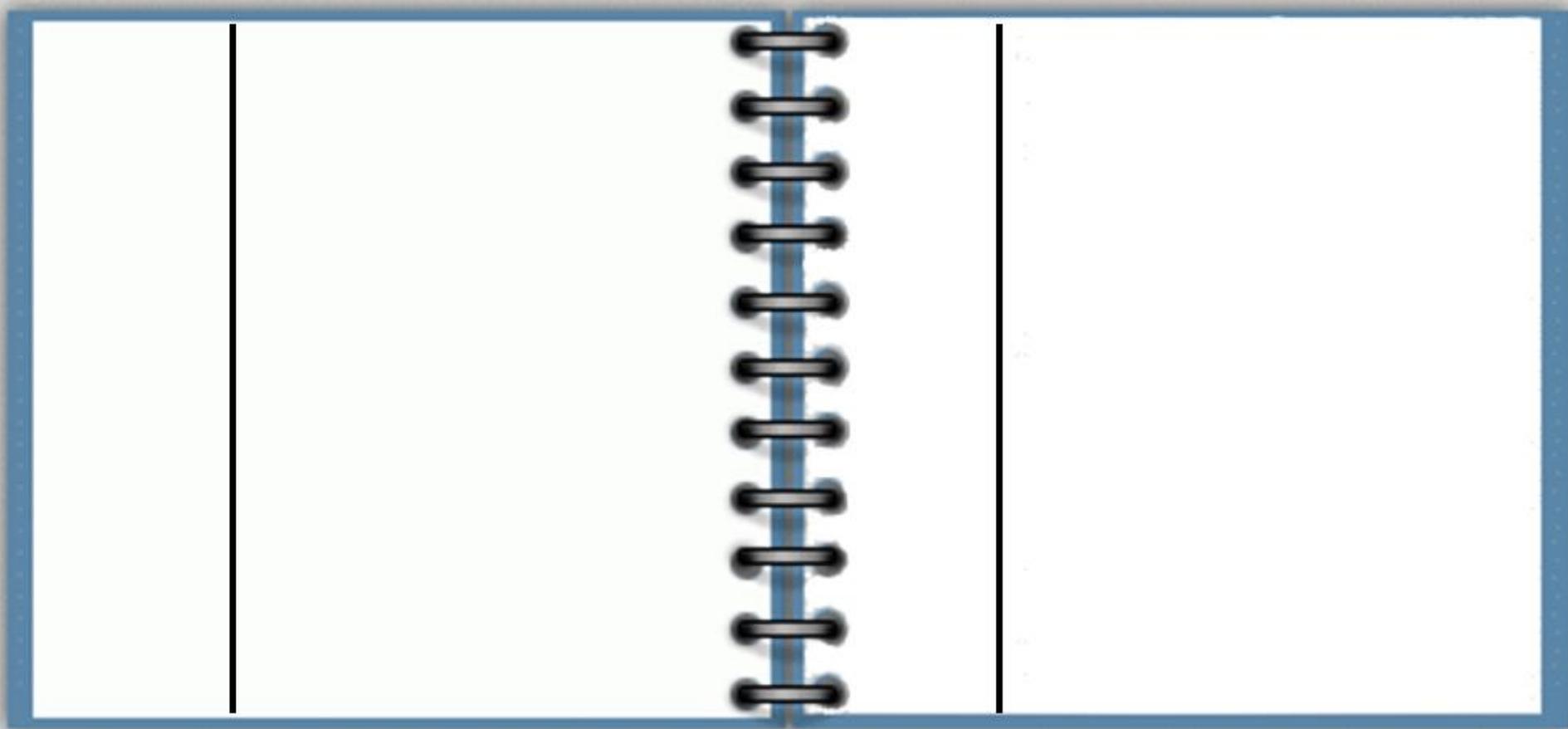


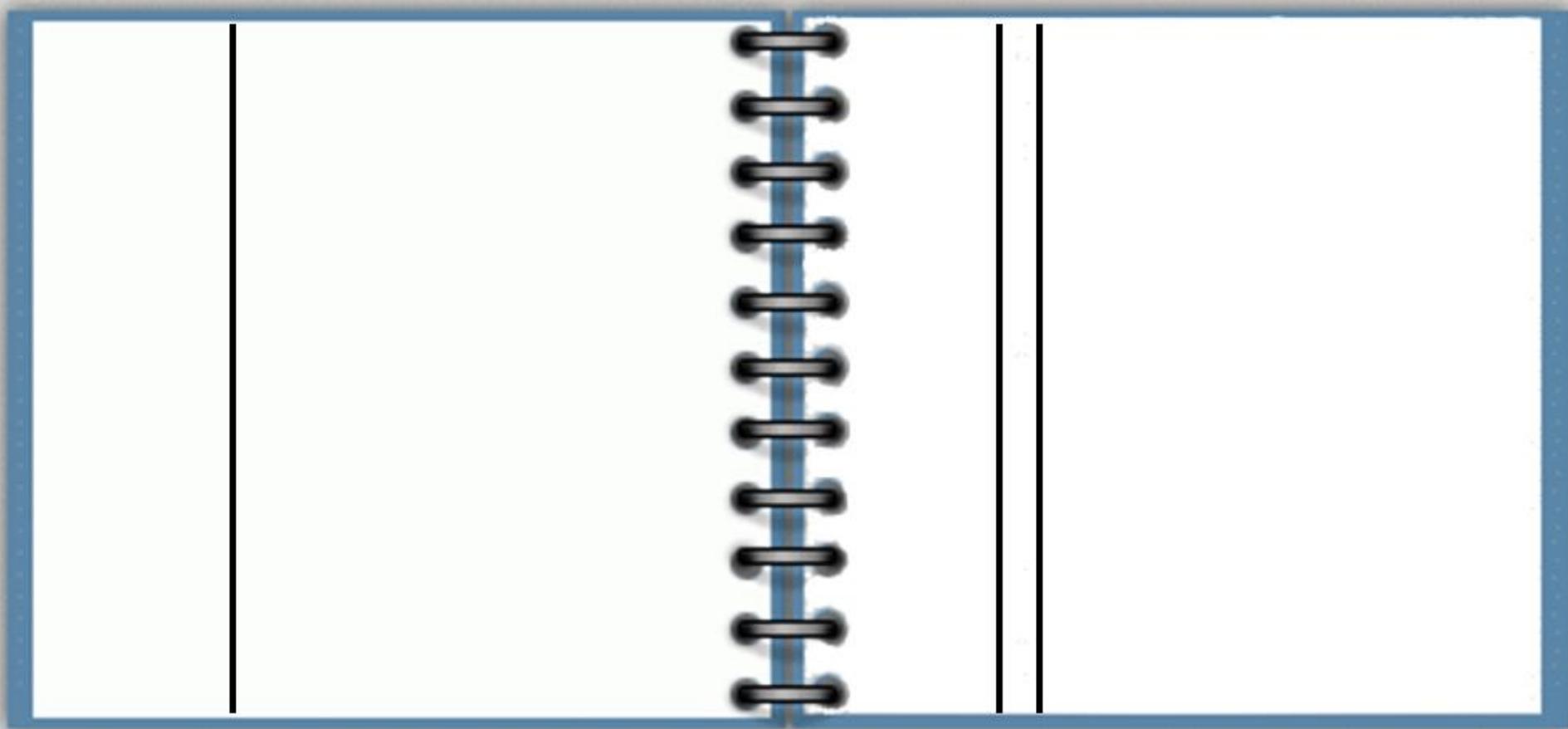
How do we layout the  
form?

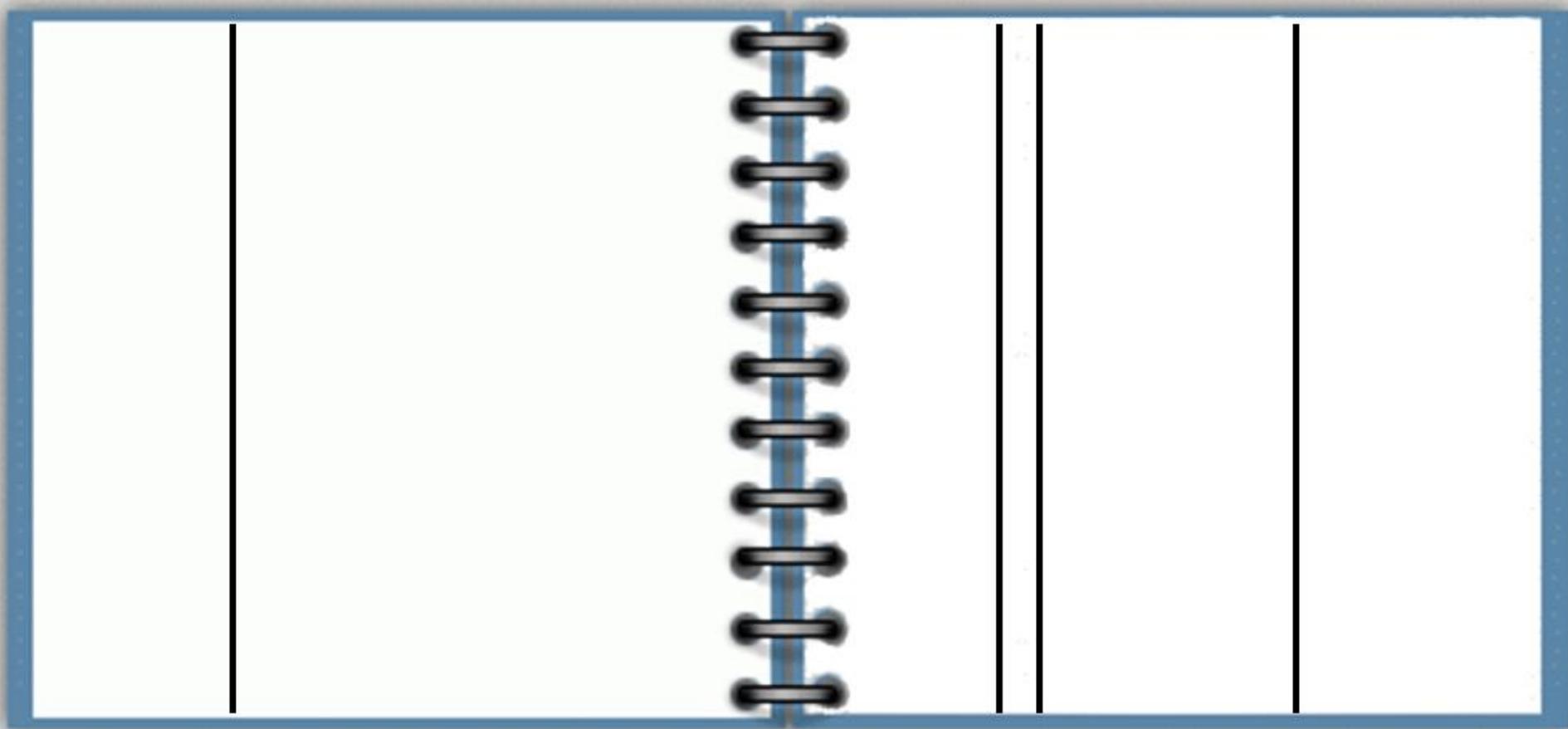


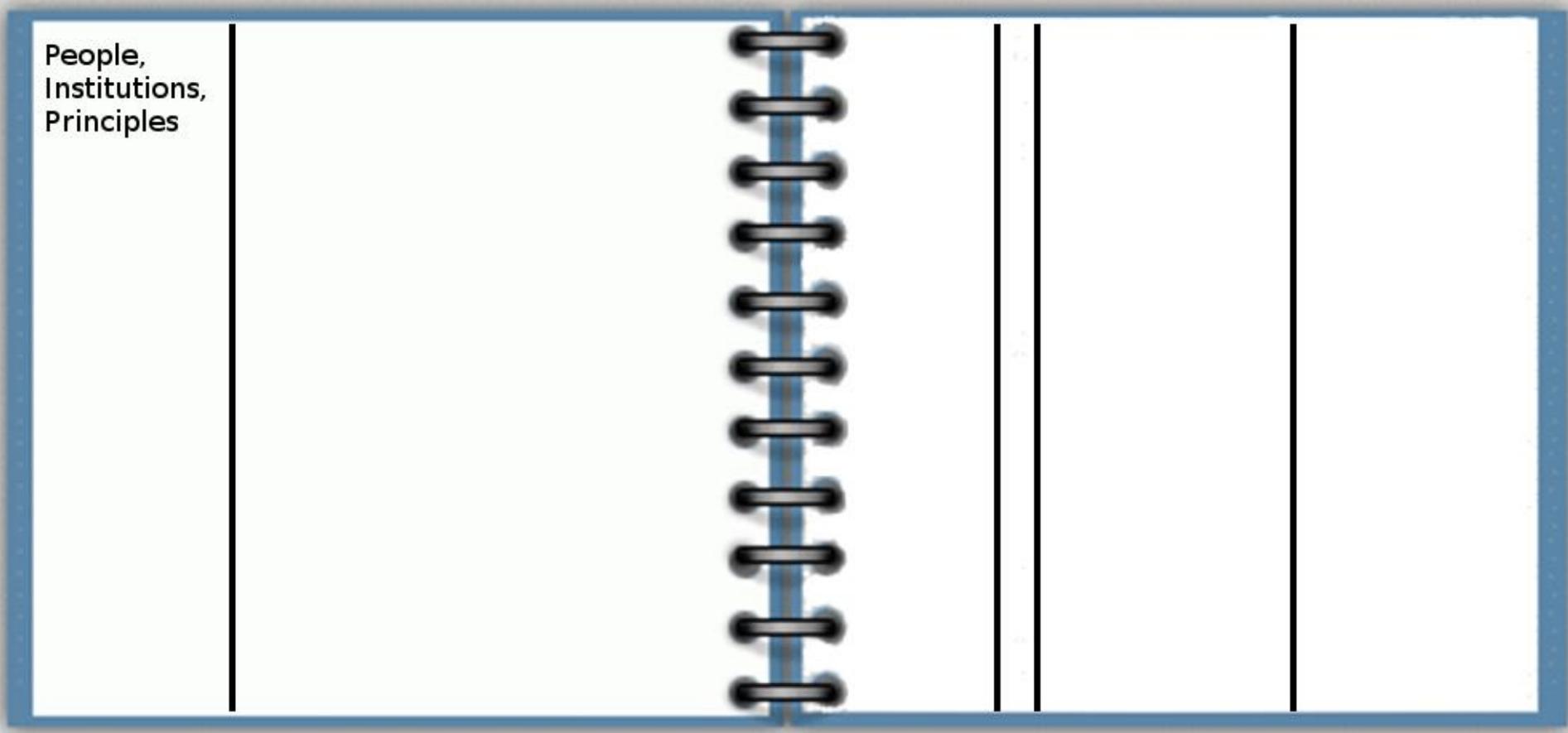












People,  
Institutions,  
Principles

We listed people, institutions or principles with whom we were angry.

People,  
Institutions,  
Principles

"CAUSE"  
< 20 words

We listed people, institutions or principles with whom we were angry.

People,  
Institutions,  
Principles

"CAUSE"  
< 20 words

Affects  
My

We asked ourselves why we were angry.

People,  
Institutions,  
Principles

"CAUSE"  
< 20 words

Affects  
My

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

For the 3<sup>rd</sup> Column:

The "Affects My" can be written out as it is on page 65.

This tends to burn into the consciousness the things we need to watch for when they are affected.

We write them over and over, especially the ones that keep cropping up.

... or we can do them as a series of checkmarks in multiple columns

People,  
Institutions,  
Principles

"CAUSE"  
< 20 words

Affects  
My  
E\$ARXSP

E = Self-Esteem

\$ = Pocketbooks

A = Ambition

R = Personal Relations

X = Sex Relations

S = Security

P = Pride (see Wife p.65)

In most cases it was found that our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions, our personal relationships (including sex) were hurt or threatened... Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal, or sex relations, which had been interfered with?

People,  
Institutions,  
Principles

"CAUSE"  
< 20 words

Affects  
My  
E\$ARXSP

1.

2.

3.

4.

In most cases it was found that our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions, our personal relationships (including sex) were hurt or threatened... Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal, or sex relations, which had been interfered with?

We went back through our lives. Nothing counted but thoroughness and honesty. When we were finished we considered it carefully. The first thing apparent was that this world and its people were often quite wrong. To conclude that others were wrong was as far as most of us ever got. The usual outcome was that people continued to wrong us and we stayed sore. Sometimes it was remorse and then we were sore at ourselves. But the more we fought and tried to have our own way, the worse matters got. As in war, the victor only *seemed* to win. Our moments of triumph were short-lived.



It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness. To the precise extent that we permit these, do we squander the hours that might have been worth while. But with the alcoholic, whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of resentment is infinitely grave. We found that it is fatal. For when harboring such feelings we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit. The insanity of alcohol returns and we drink again. And with us, to drink is to die.

If we were to live, we had to be free of anger. The grouch and the brainstorm were not for us. They may be the dubious luxury of normal men, but for alcoholics these things are poison.





We turned back to the list, for it held the key to the future. We were prepared to look at it from an entirely different angle. We began to see that the world and its people really dominated us. In that state, the wrong-doing of others, fancied or real, had power to actually kill. How could we escape? We saw that these resentments must be mastered, but how? We could not wish them away any more than alcohol.



This was our course: We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick. Though we did not like their symptoms and the way these disturbed us, they, like ourselves, were sick too. We asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend. When a person offended we said to ourselves, “This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done.”

We avoid retaliation or argument. We wouldn't treat sick people that way. If we do, we destroy our chance of being helpful. We cannot be helpful to all people, but at least God will show us how to take a kindly and tolerant view of each and every one.



People,  
Institutions,  
Principles

"CAUSE"  
< 20 words

Affects  
My  
E\$ARXSP

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

pp. 66-67 Prayer & Observation

## PRAYER AND OBSERVATION

We asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend.

Referring to our list again. Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened? Though a situation had not been entirely our fault, we tried to disregard the other person involved entirely. Where were we to blame? The inventory was ours, not the other man's. When we saw our faults we listed them. We placed them before us in black and white. We admitted our wrongs honestly and were willing to set these matters straight.



People,  
Institutions,  
Principles

"CAUSE"  
< 20 words

Affects  
My  
E\$ARXSP

My Mistakes

1.

2.

3.

4.

pp. 66-67 Prayer & Observation

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People,  
Institutions,  
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"CAUSE"  
< 20 words

Affects  
My  
E\$ARXSP

My Mistakes

What Should  
I Have Done  
Instead?

1.

2.

3.

4.

pp. 66-67 Prayer & Observation

When we saw our faults we listed them. We placed them before us in black and white. We admitted our wrongs honestly and were willing to set these matters straight.



**FEAR**

Notice that the word “fear” is bracketed alongside the difficulties with Mr. Brown, Mrs. Jones, the employer, and the wife. This short word somehow touches about every aspect of our lives. It was an evil and corroding thread; the fabric of our existence was shot through with it.



It set in motion trains of circumstances which brought us misfortune we felt we didn't deserve. But did not we, ourselves, set the ball rolling? Sometimes we think fear ought to be classed with stealing. It seems to cause more trouble.



We reviewed our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them. We asked ourselves why we had them. Wasn't it because self-reliance failed us? Self-reliance was good as far as it went, but it didn't go far enough. Some of us once had great self-confidence, but it didn't fully solve the fear problem, or any other. When it made us cocky, it was worse.



Perhaps there is a better way—we think so. For we are now on a different basis; the basis of trusting and relying upon God. We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves. We are in the world to play the role He assigns. Just to the extent that we do as we think He would have us, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable us to match calamity with serenity.



We never apologize to anyone for depending upon our Creator. We can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. All men of faith have courage. They trust their God. We never apologize for God. Instead we let Him demonstrate, through us, what He can do. We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear.

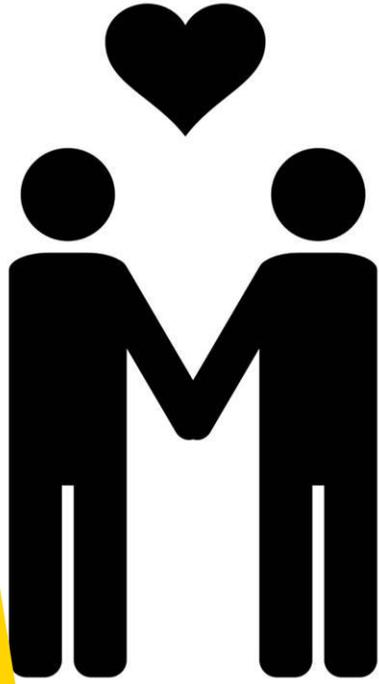
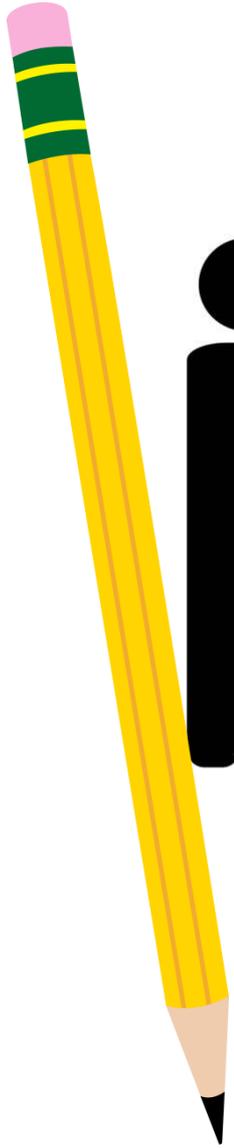
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### **The Way of Strength**

We need not apologize to anyone for depending upon the Creator. We have good reason to disbelieve those who think spirituality is the way of weakness. For us, it is the way of strength.

The verdict of the ages is that men of faith seldom lack courage. They trust their God. So we never apologize for our belief in Him. Instead, we try to let Him demonstrate, through us, what He can do.

*ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 68*



SEX

Now about sex. Many of us needed an overhauling there. But above all, we tried to be sensible on this question. It's so easy to get way off the track. Here we find human opinions running to extremes—absurd extremes, perhaps. One set of voices cry that sex is a lust of our lower nature, a base necessity of procreation. Then we have the voices who cry for sex and more sex; who bewail the institution of marriage; who think that most of the troubles of the race are traceable to sex causes. They think we do not have enough of it, or that it isn't the right kind. They see its significance everywhere. One school would allow man no flavor for his fare and the other would have us all on a straight pepper diet. We want to stay out of this controversy. We do not want to be the arbiter of anyone's sex conduct. We all have sex problems. We'd hardly be human if we didn't. What can we do about them?



We reviewed our own conduct over the years past. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate? Whom had we hurt? Did we unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness? Where were we at fault, what should we have done instead? We got this all down on paper and looked at it.

Where had we been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate?

1.

2.

3.

4.

Whom had we hurt?

Did we unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness?

Where were we at fault

What Should we Have Done Instead?

In this way we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life. We subjected each relation to this test—was it selfish or not? We asked God to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them. We remembered always that our sex powers were God-given and therefore good, neither to be used lightly or selfishly nor to be despised and loathed.



Whatever our ideal turns out to be, we must be willing to grow toward it. We must be willing to make amends where we have done harm, provided that we do not bring about still more harm in so doing. In other words, we treat sex as we would any other problem. In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come, if we want it.

God alone can judge our sex situation. Counsel with persons is often desirable, but we let God be the final judge. We realize that some people are as fanatical about sex as others are loose. We avoid hysterical thinking or advice.



Suppose we fall short of the chosen ideal and stumble? Does this mean we are going to get drunk? Some people tell us so. But this is only a half-truth. It depends on us and on our motives. If we are sorry for what we have done, and have the honest desire to let God take us to better things, we believe we will be forgiven and will have learned our lesson. If we are not sorry, and our conduct continues to harm others, we are quite sure to drink. We are not theorizing. These are facts out of our experience.



To sum up about sex: We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing. If sex is very troublesome, we throw ourselves the harder into helping others. We think of their needs and work for them. This takes us out of ourselves. It quiets the imperious urge, when to yield would mean heartache.



If we have been thorough about our personal inventory, we have written down a lot. We have listed and analyzed our resentments. We have begun to comprehend their futility and their fatality. We have commenced to see their terrible destructiveness. We have begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even our enemies, for we look on them as sick people. We have listed the people we have hurt by our conduct, and are willing to straighten out the past if we can.

“Could a greater miracle take place  
than for us to look through each other’s eyes  
for an instant?”

– Henry David Thoreau

In this book you read again and again that faith did for us what we could not do for ourselves. We hope you are convinced now that God can remove whatever self-will has blocked you off from Him. If you have already made a decision, and an inventory of your grosser handicaps, you have made a good beginning. That being so you have swallowed and digested some big chunks of truth about yourself.



What can we expect from this “strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us.”?

The beginnings of a ***Spiritual Awakening*** (Step 12)

***Unity*** & the beginning of the end of isolation (Tradition 1 & Step 8)



Learning how to live in the greatest peace, partnership, and brotherhood with all men and women, of whatever description, is ***a moving and fascinating adventure.***

12 and 12, p.77 - Step 8

Peace

