



RECOVERY ROAD ONLINE

RECOVERY STEP 4 INTRODUCTION

ZOOM UP THE HIGHWAY OF HOPE



WORKING THE RECOVERY STEPS

“STEP FOUR”

Made a searching and fearless moral and financial inventory of ourselves




SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE: TRUTH & TOLERANCE



FOURTH STEP PRAYER

Dear God,

It is I who has made my life a mess. I have done it, but I cannot undo it. My mistakes are mine and I will begin a searching and fearless moral and financial inventory. I will write down my wrongs, but I will also include that which is good. I pray for the strength to complete the task.





STEP FOUR

MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL AND FINANCIAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES.

Steps four through nine are sometimes called the “Housecleaning Steps”. Many newcomers greatly struggle with these steps. They often want to let sleeping dogs lie. They don’t see the point in dredging up the past and rehashing old quarrels. However, learning to look at life honestly and fearlessly is the beginning of our new way of thinking and living. Just as a business can’t survive without a true inventory of its assets and liabilities, neither can we.

Before we can begin to make smart and rational decisions about our life, we have to develop the courage to view the world exactly as it is including the wreckage we created. We can neither conclude that we were entirely blameless in an unfair world nor that we were the worst people to ever inhabit this globe. The reality is that we were somewhere in the middle with most everybody else. This is the beginning of learning to feel that we belong in this world – that we are a worker among workers and a friend among friends. Only after completing these next steps can we begin to feel that we are right sized and truly comfortable in our own skin.



STEP FOUR

MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL AND FINANCIAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES.

Typically, we have been in denial about much of our past behavior and have used gambling as an escape from facing that past. To now begin to honestly face these things and to actually write them down seems impossible. This reaction is really nothing more than Fear. Some people have suggested that the word FEAR stands for Forget Everything And Run. We believe that it can also stand for Face Everything And Recover. The reason that we know that we can now do this when previously we may not have been able to is that now we have a Higher Power in our life! If at any point we find ourselves procrastinating this step, we can simply close our eyes and say "God (or whatever name we have given to our Higher Power), please grant me the willingness and courage to continue with this step." Usually this prayer is reliably answered fairly quickly. If you find that you are still unable to move forward with this step, it may be necessary for you to go back to Step Three and continue to practice the Third Step Prayer.



STEP FOUR

MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL AND FINANCIAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES.

You should probably plan on spending several weeks on this step. Thoroughness is important. If we try to cut corners or avoid the toughest issues, working this step is likely to be a waste of time. The method we found best to work this step is to break it up into small, bite-size pieces. That way nothing seems too difficult. Also, we have found it helpful to work this step concurrent with the 5th step (Admitted to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs) broken down in parts. In other words, after every work sheet we meet with our sponsor and discuss what we wrote. We find this helps making these critical steps not so overwhelming. After you have finished with all of the worksheets, you should retain them in a secure location, as you will be referring to them in future steps.

While there are certainly many different ways to work the 4th step, experience suggests that this comprehensive approach suggested here greatly simplifies steps five through eight and allows us to move through those other steps more quickly.



STEP FOUR

MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL AND FINANCIAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES.

If there is any part of this step that you feel uncomfortable discussing with your sponsor, you may instead discuss that part with another Recovery Road Online member, a trusted friend, a therapist, a spiritual advisor etc. The point is that you will need to discuss it with another human being as an essential part of your 5th step.

There are really two major parts to this step, the moral inventory and financial inventory. In some cases, there is significant overlap of the two, but we find it is most effective if we try to work them separately.

