



“Admitted to god, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs”

Step 5
takeethe12.org

**The One Thing I Need To Know About This Step:
Others See Us Better Than We Do**

Spiritual Principle of the Step:
INTEGRITY

Reading Assignment:
BB: Pgs. 72-75 / 12&12: Pgs. 55-62

Definition of Integrity: Adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty. The state of being whole, entire, or undiminished.

STEP SUMMARY

Have you ever noticed that the Fifth Step doesn't say that we just admit our wrongs? It says that we admit the EXACT NATURE of our wrongs, so we need to do more than just confess what we did. We also need to see WHY we did what we did so that we can ask God to help us with it.

It's obvious why we share our inventory with another person – because we are MASTERS at believing in our own justifications and half-truths. Aren't we the ones who used to say we didn't have a drinking problem? Didn't we tell ourselves over and over that we were doing fine as we were sinking deeper and deeper into the abyss of alcoholism? Since we're not good judges of character, especially our own, we must confide in someone else. Only ANOTHER person can see us as we REALLY are. That's why it says that a SOLITARY self-appraisal is insufficient.

The purpose of this Step is to help ease the anxiety, depression and irritability of hiding the worst parts of us. We are able to rid ourselves of isolation and loneliness. If we don't report to someone on our shortcomings, we become God in our own lives as we did when we drank! THIS is the exact nature of our wrongs: We thought we were God – We thought we were in charge.

“What we used to be like” is not described in a “drunkalogue” (as it's commonly referred to but listed nowhere in our first 164). It is described best in the reasons for our spiritual disobedience that led to our alcoholism (“12 & 12” p.174). It is when we lay out all of the defects of character that block us from our happiness (and from God as we understand God).

“I was fearful – and I drank...”
“I was resentful – and I drank...”
“I was selfish – and I drank...”

A really effective description of what we used to be like will not list all of the alcohol you drank, or what the consequences of your actions were when you did drink. It will list the many defects of character that had you believe the only solution to your problem WAS to drink.

Therefore we have no reason not to read our inventory to someone. My relationship with my sponsor reinforces spiritual principles in my life. Every time I read an inventory, I receive the three blessings that are promised in the Fifth Step of the “12 & 12”:

- 1.) an end to loneliness and a sense of belonging to A.A. (p. 57)
- 2.) a feeling that I could be forgiven and that I am able to forgive others (p. 58); and
- 3.) a desire for true humility: a clear recognition of what and who I really am, followed by a sincere attempt to become what I could be (p. 58).



What Can I Surrender in this Step?

- 1.) Fear of sharing my inventory with another human being.

To see the **Checklist** for this Step, visit takeethe12.org

MYTHS ABOUT THIS STEP

It's not necessary to share your defects with another person – it's enough that your Higher Power knows.

It's very important to reveal your inventory to another person, so you can receive feedback and experience. You'll feel a huge weight lifted once you confide in another. This will allow you to move on to Step 6 with humility.

INVENTORY

Taking a step displays a willingness to write inventory and allow it to surrender something within us. Write inventory on your most serious shortcomings around the practical application of this step in your life today (“How am I applying the spiritual principle found in this Step to every moment of my life?”).

Note: It is recommended this inventory be written AFTER you've read your 4th Step inventory to another person.

In Your Personal Relationships:

- Am I now able to forgive others and myself?
- Am I ready for a sincere attempt to become what I can be?
- Do I get wrapped up in the affairs of the world rather than giving first place to spiritual development?

Corrective Measure(s)?

At Work:

- Am I willing to believe that my boss or coworkers are entitled to the truth about my abilities and my work?

Corrective Measure(s)?

With God and in A.A.:

- Have I omitted anything or skimmed anywhere on my work in the first five steps?
- Do I now have a sense of belonging to A.A. and a personal relationship with God?

Corrective Measure(s)?