

## Big Book Comes Alive Study Group Joe & Charlie Audio Workshop

### WEEK #20

Step Four-Chapter Five-How It Works

(Session 30 - 00:12:52)

J & C Column 4 – what feelings did I create in others?

Did I unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion, or bitterness? What should I have done instead? In column 4 not only are we looking to see those things that we did but we also need to be looking at what should we have done instead? We're trying to shape a new sex life of the future where we can still engage in it and enjoy it yet at the same time not hurt other people.

Column 5 – which character defect is involved?

Same old deal. If I wasn't so selfish I wouldn't be doing some of those things in a sexual area that hurt other people. If I wasn't so dishonest I wouldn't be sneaking around behind my wife's back lying to her all the time anyhow. If I wasn't so afraid of facing life without that sex to build my self-esteem and ego and etc probably wouldn't be doing it in the first place. If I really considered my wife and my children and other human beings ahead of my own needs and wants I wouldn't be doing those things that's going to take a chance on hurting other people. And I'll guarantee you that if I stay selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, frightened and inconsiderate.

I'm going to keep right on doing the same old things.

I'm going to keep right on hurting people in the sexual area.

I'm going to have to be scared to death of what they're going to do to me if they catch me.

The guilt and remorse eats me up.

Sooner or later it blocks me off from God and I end up drunk over it.

It's not a question of right and wrong. It's a question of what can we do and live with it with peace of mind and happiness and be able to stay sober in the future. At the very least we're going to have to do something about some of these things or sooner or later it eats us up. Now once again we're doing step 4. This is the sex part. In the fifth column we see all the information now we need for step 5,6 and 7. Quite naturally all the names in column 1 will come off this sheet and be added to the sheet to be used later on for steps 8 and 9.

Again I was amazed to see in many cases the same names appearing on all 3 sheets. Barbara was certainly on all 3 sheets. I even had the IRS on all 3 sheets. I resented them, I feared them and I gave them a pretty good screwing before I got through with them too.

Now let's see what we do with this information.

**Big Book p. 69, par. 2**      *"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? "*

J & C      And prayer is going to be used three different times in the next page or so. Here's the first one.

**Big Book p. 69, par. 2 cont.**      *"We asked God to mould 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. "*

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J & C You see God never did give us anything that was bad.

**Big Book p. 69, par. 3**

*"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."*

J & C You know this is an area that I don't think we need a whole lot of advice in anyhow. I think all of us deep down inside, we know what we should be doing and what we shouldn't be doing. You know I've never been in a sexual situation that was wrong that I didn't know it was wrong before I ever got into it. Didn't keep me from getting into it. But I never got into one yet that was wrong that I didn't know it was wrong before I ever got into it. And if you start running around asking people for sexual advice, if you ask 6 different people you're going to get 6 different answers. And then you'll have to decide which one of those to follow. And besides that I really can't think of a worse place in the world to get sexual advice than in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. I think that's a hell of a place to look for it. I think all we've got to do I listen to that little voice inside. I think it pretty well knows. And I think it will pretty well tell us what we should and what we shouldn't do and if we follow it were probably not going to hurt other people.

**Big Book p. 70, par. 1**

*"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."*

J & C You know I had a young fellow come to me not long ago he's still in his twenties. And he said, "You know Charlie my sponsor said I couldn't have any sex the first year of sobriety. Is that right?" And I said "No that's not necessarily right. You can have all the sex you want the first year. The second year you can have it with other people." You know sometimes it's hard enough to quit drinking without doing some other things too.

**Big Book p. 70, par. 2**

*"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 [horny condition] imperious urge, when to yield would mean heartache."*

J & C Old Bill used some fancy words didn't he?

Ok now we're going to make one other suggestion before we leave the inventory. The book says we have the list for our amends we made it when we took step 4. And we've looked at the people we've hurt on

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the resentment sheet. We looked at the on the fear sheet. We looked at them on the sex sheet. But there's other people we've hurt in other ways too that perhaps haven't popped up on any of these sheets. Maybe somebody that we've stole money from them. Or maybe somebody we hurt physically. Many ways we hurt people. And any of those names that have come up on at least one of these 3 sheets we suggest we take this fourth sheet, a review of harms other than sexual, and do exactly the same thing with it that we've done with the other sheets.

Page 10

### REVIEW OF HARMS OTHER THAN SEXUAL

COLUMN 1 WHO DID I HURT:	COLUMN 2 WHAT DID I DO?	COLUMN 3 AFFECTS MY: Which part of self caused me to do what I did? Was it caused by the social instinct, the security instinct, or the sex instinct?	COLUMN 4 WHAT FEELINGS DID I CREATE IN OTHERS? Did I arouse jealousy, suspicion, bitterness, anger, desire to retaliate, fear, etc.? What should I have done instead?	COLUMN 5 WHERE HAD I BEEN: "Sellin" "Detonant" "Self Speaking and lightened" "Innocent/ignorant?" Which of the above character defects caused me to do what I do to harm another?

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Column 1 - who did I hurt

Column 2 – what did I do

Column 3 - what part of self is affected

Column 4 – what feelings did I create in others? What should I have done instead?

Column 5 – which character defect is involved?

And if we'll do that then we've got everything here that we'll need for 4,5,6 and 7, 8 and 9. And when we've done this sheet, when we have completed our inventory we've got everything we need now for 4,5,6,7, 8 and 9 and now then we are ready to get on with our business. Very, very simple procedure. Now let me ask you something.

Did we see anything here to be afraid of?

Did we see anything that was complicated we couldn't do it?

Did we make a list of dirty filthy nasty items?

Did we get any positive results from this?

Is there any reason why we shouldn't go ahead and do step 4?

We don't need to procrastinate any longer now do we?

It is simple enough that we can get with it get on with the program. A little bit of study and a little bit of help from your sponsor and a couple of evenings and you can have it done just that quick. Now the book says

**Big Book p. 70, par. 3**        *"If we have been thorough about our personal inventory, we have written down a lot. We have listed and analyzed our resentments. "*

J & C Now some people look at the word analyzed as a bad word. All this is, is another word that means truth. We have takes a truthful, a moral truthful honest analytical inventory. To analyze something simply means to get down to the truth of it. Now he didn't say it but we've listed and analyzed our fears. We've listed and analyzed our sexual harms. We've listed and analyzed harms other than sexual.

**Big Book p. 70, par. 3 cont.**    *"We have begun to comprehend their futility and their fatality. We have commenced to see their terrible destructiveness. "*

J & C Now here's some results.

**Big Book p. 70, par. 3 cont.**    *"We have begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even our enemies, for we look on them as sick people. "*

J & C My God what a change in personality already. This is a real change taking place here in step 4. We don't have to wait till step 12 to get something.

**Big Book p. 70, par. 3 cont.**    *"We have listed the people we have hurt by our conduct, and are willing to straighten out the past if we can.*

*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*

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*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. "*

J & C So what are some of the grosser handicaps which we've looked at?

- Resentment
- Fear
- Guilt
- Remorse

What are some of the basic character defects that we've looked at and the basic cause?

- Selfish
- Dishonest
- Self-seeking
- Frightened
- Inconsiderate

We have really looked at those things very carefully haven't we? Now the book recognizes that we will never be perfect. It said these are our grosser handicaps. I think one of the greatest mistakes being made in AA today is everybody is sitting around waiting until they get well so they can do step 4 perfect. You can't do that. Let's get rid of these grosser things. We've got another step later on that we are going to use this process for the rest of our life. We'll be inventorying forever. And it will get better and better. But these are the major things that kill us. We've got them behind us. Now we can get on with our business. You know I think this is all the inventory I need anyhow. As I look back at my lifetime I can't spot an emotional problem I have ever had that didn't revolve around one of 3 things.

- Madder than hell at somebody.
- Scared to death about something.
- Or I've done something I shouldn't have done and the guilt and remorse was eating me up.

As I project my mind in the future I don't see anything that's going to bother me that's not going to revolve around the same 3 things.

- Madder than hell
- Scared to death
- Filled with guilt and remorse

I think this is the perfect inventory for people like us. And we will continue to work on it the rest of our lives anyhow.

Now I don't know if you all have noticed or not but nearly all information in the big book on sex is on page 69. I don't know that that has any significance whatsoever that just happens to be where nearly all the sex information happens to be is on page 69.

You know we heard a story about a young lady who had been in AA about 90 days and she went to her sponsor and she said "Sponsor, I've got a problem." Her sponsor said, "What is it?" She said, "well it's this sex thing. Sober I don't know what to do. Anything I've ever done in the sexual area, tried to attract a member of the opposite sex, or anything else it's always been while drinking. Sober I just don't know how to function. " Her sponsor said "Well go and get out your big book. Read page 69. It will have the answer

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to any problems you might have. “ So the young lady goes home and gets her book out and proceeds to read but she got confused on page numbers. Instead of page 69, she read page 96. Just for the hell of it why don't you go over to page 96 and see what she read.

**Big Book p. 96**                    *"Do not be discouraged if your prospect does not respond at once. Search out another alcoholic and try again. You are sure to find someone desperate enough to accept with eagerness what you offer. We find it a waste of time to keep chasing a man who cannot or will not work with you. If you leave such a person alone, he may soon become convinced that he cannot recover by himself. To spend too much time on any one situation is to deny some other alcoholic an opportunity to live and be happy. One of our Fellowship failed entirely with his first half dozen prospects. He often says that if he had continued to work on them, he might have deprived many others, who have since recovered, of their chance. "*

J & C I think that's one of the most appropriate things I've ever read. It just goes on and on and on.

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### Chapter Six-Into Action

(Session 30 - 00:13:39)

J & C Let's go to page 72, "Into Action". We want to run very briefly now through Steps 5, 6 & 7. So we go to page 72, Into action, now it's not into thinking, it's into action

**Big Book p. 72, par. 1**            *Having made our personal inventory, what shall we do about it? We have been trying to get a new attitude.*

J & C Remember Dr. Jung said

**(BB p. 27, line 18)**    "Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, ..." **Big Book p. 72, par. 1**            *and a new relationship with our Creator*

J & C And our book said back on page 45 (line 13) that the main object of this book would enable me to find a power greater than myself, which would solve my problem.

**Big Book p. 72, par. 1**                    *and to discover the obstacles in our path.*

J & C And what are some of the obstacles ... the resentments, fears, harms done to other people

**Big Book p. 72, par. 1**                    *We have admitted certain defects*

J & C And what are these defects, selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, frightened, and inconsiderate attitudes

**Big Book p. 72, par. 1**                    *we have ascertained in a rough way what the trouble is; we have put our finger on the weak items in our personal inventory. Now these are about to be cast out. This requires action on our part, which, when completed, will mean that we have admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our defects. This brings us to the Fifth Step in the program of recovery mentioned in the preceding chapter.*

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J & C We know that Step 5 says, „We admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs“. But if you'll notice here in the narrative, he said the exact nature of our defects. Now people used to ask Bill about this and we've known two ladies that worked with him/for him for years and they both tell us the same thing. People would say Bill, why did you use the word „wrong“ in Step 5, yet in the narrative here in the book you use the word defects? And by the way Bill, what's the difference anyhow between a wrong in 5, a defect in 6, and a shortcoming in 7? And they both said that Bill would just rear back and smile and he would say when I took English and Writing courses in college they taught me not to use the same words over and over. It shows how dumb you are. He said there really are no differences in these things.

He said,

- (a) In Step 4, we find those things that block us off from God.
- (b) In Step 5, we're going to talk about them to another human being.
- (c) In Step 6, we're going to become willing to turn them loose.
- (d) In Step 7, we're going to ask God to take them away.

And he said, you can call them anything you want to, a wrong, a thought, a mistake, a defect, a personality flaw, whatever. We're going to notice on the next couple of pages that's exactly what he does with them. I followed it up in the 12 & 12 thirteen years later.

Not only does he do it there, he does it twice as bad as he did in the Big Book. Using these words interchangeably, back and forth, all of them meaning identically the same thing.

#### ***Big Book p. 72, par. 1***

*This is perhaps difficult - especially discussing our defects with another person. We think we have done well enough in admitting these things to ourselves. There is doubt about that. In actual practice, we usually find a solitary self-appraisal insufficient. Many of us thought it necessary to go much further. We will be more reconciled to discussing ourselves with another person when we see good reasons why we should do so. The best reason first: If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking.*

J & C You take these forms now (Step 4 Inventory pg. 65), and the very, very vital information that we've got here. The book says that the solitary self-appraisal is insufficient. I did the very best I could do filling out these forms with the limited knowledge that I had and experience, but I did the best I could do. Now I take these to another human being and discuss them from left to right all the way across.

Someone else who has gone on before me and whose done the inventory according to the Big Book and now that person is going to help me to glean more information out of each of these situations that's going to help me. I need that information, because a solitary self-appraisal is insufficient. I'll give you an example.

Looking around this room today, this weekend, I've noticed two or three character defects. It's real easy for me to look at you and see your defects of character. There's nothing between you and me except air. But

It's very, very difficult for me to look at me and see the truth and see my defects of character because of years and a lifetime of rationalization and justification of these attitudes.

I need another human being to be able to look at me objectively and help me see things I couldn't see cause I'm starting out on a brand new lifetime engagement here and I need all the information and help I can get to have a very successful life.

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And I did the very best I could do on the inventory process,  
but a solitary self-appraisal is insufficient.

I need God and another human being to help me see things that I couldn't see.

Now to be sure we have to contradictions here over on page 73, on that first paragraph where it says,  
"More than most people..." the sentence before that says,

**Big Book, p. 73, line 7**      *But they had not learned enough of humility, fearlessness and honesty, in the sense we find it necessary, until they told someone else all their life story.*

J & C Now there's the statement that got us confused about Step 4.

And we all began to write our life story thinking that would be Step 4. But as we can see 95% of our life story really doesn't have anything to do with our alcoholism.

The fact I was born in 1929 that really doesn't have anything to do with it. But I'll tell you what I have done.

If I've taken the inventory the way the book says, I've shared my life story in those areas that really count. Resentments didn't come in my head just today. They've been popping in my head as far back as I can remember.

I've shared all my life story - resentment wise.

Fears didn't come in my head just today. They've been coming in my head as far back as I can remember.

I shared all my life story - fear wise.

The harms I've done to other people. I didn't just hurt them yesterday.

I've been hurting people as far back as I can remember.

My mother said to me one day, Charlie, you were the meanest kid I ever say. She said I had a little problem loving you myself. Now when Mama don't love you, you're pretty bad off. As I look at these things today, my whole life is centered anyhow around those three things. Those resentments, those fears, and those harms I've done to others. So I don't have any quarrel with that statement at all any more. If we've done our inventory the way the book says, we've shared our life story. Now here's why we need to share this with another human being.

**Big Book p. 73, par. 2**

*More than most people, the alcoholic leads a double life. He is very much the actor. To the outer world he presents his stage character. This is the one he likes his fellows to see. He wants to enjoy a certain reputation, but knows in his heart he doesn't deserve it.*

J & C A practicing alcoholic is trying to live two lives. You know we've got a conscious. Whenever we're sober we try to live like people are supposed to live. But when we're drinking, since alcohol lowers the inhibitions, we do things we would never think about doing sober. We're living two lifetimes when we are a practicing alcoholic.

**Big Book p. 73, par. 2**

*The inconsistency is made worse by the things he does on his sprees. Coming to his senses, he is revolted at certain episodes he vaguely remembers. These memories are a nightmare. He trembles to think someone might have observed him. As far as he can, he pushes these memories far inside himself. He hopes they will never see the light of day. He is under constant fear and tension that makes for more drinking.*

J & C You know let's face it; we alcoholics have become the world's greatest con artists. You have to be.

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You couldn't live as a practicing alcoholic if you didn't learn how to lie, cheat, con, manipulate, steal, whatever's necessary. And I think the one we have to con the most is ourselves. I don't think we could live with ourselves if we had to really see what's going on when we're drinking.

But you see we got a little thing called resentments.

And we use those resentments to transfer blame to others and that way we can live with ourselves.

Now if you've been doing that for 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 40 years and you come to A.A. and you take Step 4,

you'll be just as honest as you can with yourself - but let's face it, we can't be honest with ourselves.

I now need to take my inventory, take it to another human being, one who has walked this walk before me who understands 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 according to the Big Book and have them help me see the things I can't see about me.

They're not going to change anything in Column 1, they're not going to change anything in Column 2, but they'll probably change some things in Column 3.

In one place I said this was caused by the sex instinct and he said nah it isn't, he said you're just trying to build your self esteem that's all your trying to do.

In the fifth column in one place I said this was caused by fear, and he said this is plain damn dishonesty, that's all this is.

He helped me see things I couldn't see.

We're getting ready to start a lifetime changing process.  
We need to be sure that we're trying to change the right things,  
so we can have peace of mind in the future.

And we just can't see that by ourselves. I know confession is good for the soul. And I if you belong to a denomination that requires it you ought a go do that. But I still think you ought a take your inventory to somebody in A.A., preferably a good sponsor if you got one that knows the program.

The main thing is do they really know the program?

If they do they can help us.

If they don't then all we are going to get out of it is confession

We need more than that. Page 74 tells people, tells you how to pick somebody. That is not valid today like it was in 1939. In '39 the first person out here in California that got this Big Book, didn't have any other A.A. members or any sponsor and it was difficult for them to find somebody to do Step 5 with. That's what page 74 deals with. But today there's plenty of good people out here in California that understands this program, that have worked this program, that have walked this Step before, that's who we need to select to take Step 5 with. Hopefully it will be our sponsor, page 75 tells us how to do that.

*Big Book p. 75, par 1*

*When we decide who is to hear our story, we waste no time. We have a written inventory and we are prepared for a long talk. We explain to our partner what we are about to do and why we have to do it. He should realize that we are engaged upon a life-and-death errand. Most people approached in this way will be glad to help; they will be honored by our confidence.*

J & C I'll never forget when I called my sponsor Franklin, and I said Franklin can I come over this weekend and do my inventory, do my Fifth Step. He said sure, I'd love to have you come over. So I went to there to Olive Branch, Mississippi and I sat down there with Franklin that evening and I said I've got it

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all prepared here, you've helped me a lot and I appreciate it. He said yeah I know you do and I'm ready to get started, but first of all let's you and I do the 3rd Step Prayer together. That's the kind of sponsor I had and we asked God to be with us during this process. And we did that and we sat about looking into this inventory process and Franklin helped me see things that I couldn't see. I shared these things with him from left to right, all the way across and he asked me questions and helped me see things I couldn't see, and shared with me some of the things that had happened with him and how he could see things. And it helped me a whole lot, it helped me a lot And then after that weekend was over, like the book says

*Big Book, p. 75, par 2*

*We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past. Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, we are delighted.*

J & C Now we see the results. Some more promises.....

*Big Book, p. 75, par 2*

*We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator. We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual experience.*

J & C We believed in Step two, now we begin to have a spiritual experience

*Big Book, pg. 75, par 2*      *The feeling that the drink problem has disappeared will often come strongly. We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe.*

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