

STEP 4

Made a searching and fearless moral and financial inventory of ourselves.

Trust your Higher Power and then clean house.

The first three steps have laid the groundwork for Step Four; surrender to a powerlessness to gamble and an inability to manage the problems in one's life. Then acquire a senior partner much greater than oneself to guide and accompany you through the remaining steps. Together all can accomplish so much which cannot be done alone.

Step Four - now you are into the "Cleaning House" area of your life. Now begin an intensive inner search to locate as much guilt, and good, as you can uncover. This search is healthy and practical because dormant, accumulating guilt has long been an enemy. Most compulsive gamblers covered this guilt with a clever facade called rationalization. In the past rationalization tricked us into making very bad actions seem not so bad or even good. Honesty and only honesty can break down this tricky facade. Then you can see yourself exactly as you are for perhaps the first time in your life. Face squarely the financial and emotional wrongs that have been done in order to then forgive oneself.

While doing Step Four how do you uncover all the guilt: A thorough reading of "A Guide to Fourth Step Inventory" available through your group or from the International Service Office can be of great assistance. Then, an autobiographical approach starting with your first bet or even earlier, and moving forward to the present seems indicated. As one moves along many areas of guilt long forgotten will come to mind. Perhaps you will see some of the following — over-indulgence, greed, lying, dishonesty, failure to accept responsibility, self-destruction, destruction of others, excessive waste of time, arrogance, resentment, jealousy and many others. Guilt is personal, therefore one must seek it out by oneself.

Your mind will probably turn to loved ones and the harm laid on them; The dishing out of insecurity so generously. This guilt must be fully realized so we will not be tempted to deal with it later by further gambling. In taking inventory honestly, examine each incident that you can recall from your gambling days. This includes the things you did and those you failed to do: The physical abuse and the verbal abuse which left a lifetime impression. There is much manipulation of people which took from them their right to lead their own lives.

No two gamblers are alike yet none is unique. Each of us has our own collection of guilt which must be unearthed. After discovering and digging up this guilt, one will find it necessary to rid oneself of it. The steps that follow will show how to do this. By practicing these steps you can attain a better way of life based on solid healing principles.

With the help of your Higher Power you can acknowledge guilt as you work the fourth step. Our Higher Power, as we understand Him, can do for us what we could not do for ourselves.

After completing Step Four and having accumulated your personal barrel of guilt you can get rid of it in Step Five and find that you are an O.K. person. Then the good life can be maintained one day at a time.

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Step Four tells us that our instincts are God given, yet misdirected instincts lead to serious emotional problems.

1. The need for security, which is instinctive, drives one to become power mad and selfish.
2. Greed, lust, envy and pride are destructive habits.

DISCUSS:

- A. What obsessions and excesses in our lives became a problem?
- B. Are we prone to tolerate bad habits rather than change them?

Willingness to look at our misdirected instincts (defects) is pride in reverse.

1. It is a step toward humility.
2. It is a lessening of our "big shot ego."

DISCUSS:

- A. Persistence to gamble after we discovered we may be destroying ourselves.
- B. What experience brought us to GA/or finally started our belief in GA?

Many members feel that gambling is their only defect.

1. But we identify with other members who claim many defects.
2. We learn that a drastic change in many areas of our lives will be required to maintain the desire to stop gambling.

DISCUSS:

- A. Were we prone to blame others for:
 1. Our failings?
 2. Gambling defeats/losses?
 3. Gambling?
 4. Name other reasons.
- B. What does taking "others inventory" symbolize?

Step Four warns that we must be fearless when taking our moral and financial inventories.

1. Our egos have created many road blocks.
2. Taking 1st, 2nd, & 3rd inventories will give us a clear perspective of ourselves.

DISCUSS:

- A. Methods for taking inventory.
 1. Written.
 2. How Often/When.
 3. Use of "A Guide to Fourth Step Inventory."
- B. Pick your special defect and discuss:

Greed
Anger
Pride

Lust
Envy
Talk too much

Selfishness
Rationalizing
Impatience

Blaming
Bad listener
Other _____