

does the writing, and the person or persons with whom we share our checklist. Now we are going to provide you with an example to illustrate the inventory process.

We have a one-page checklist for you to use. It has the liabilities on the left side and the assets on the right side of the sheet, which is the same format used in the June 1946 issue of *The A.A. Grapevine*. All we have done is remove some of the vertical lines, so the sponsor or sharing partner can list, to the right of the appropriate liabilities, the people, institutions and principles the newcomer is willing to talk about.

The first thing the sponsor or sharing partner does is fold the checklist so the assets are hidden from view. Then, he or she asks the newcomer about his or her resentments, by saying, "Who or what are you angry at?" As the newcomer talks about his or her "**grudge list**," the sponsor or sharing partner puts the names of the people, institutions and principles to the right of the word, **RESENTMENT**.

Keep in mind that it is not necessary to list every resentment the newcomer has ever had in order for the inventory to be thorough. The objective is to get "**to causes and conditions**" and "**get rid of them promptly and without regret.**" Sometimes it takes only a few incidents to make clear that **RESENTMENT** has been blocking the newcomer from an intimate, two-way relationship with the "**One who has all power.**" Besides, it is more productive to take a few resentments through the entire inventory and restitution process than to list so many resentments that the newcomer becomes overwhelmed and gives up on the process.

It is the pain associated with this “**fact-finding and . . . fact-facing process**” that must be relieved as quickly as possible. Once the newcomer develops confidence and conviction that this course of action will reduce the “**terror, bewilderment, frustration, (and) despair**” associated with living on self-will, he or she will be much more inclined to do additional inventories in the future.

Next, the sponsor or sharing partner asks the newcomer to describe the reasons why he or she is angry and where he or she is at fault. If they both agree that the newcomer needs to make an amends, the sponsor circles the applicable name to the right of **RESENTMENT**.

After the sponsor or sharing partner has compiled the resentment list, he or she moves on to the fear inventory by asking, “Who or what are you afraid of?” Let’s start with those items for which there is no resentment.” After jotting down any names to the right of the word, **FEAR**, the sponsor or sharing partner asks, “Let’s revisit your resentment list. Are there any situations where there is both fear and resentment?”

Then the newcomer describes the events surrounding each fearful episode. Once again, the sponsor or sharing partner asks the newcomer to look at “**where were we to blame.**” If they both agree that the newcomer needs to make an amends, the sponsor circles the relevant name to the right of **FEAR**.

After compiling the **RESENTMENT** and **FEAR** checklists, the sponsor or sharing partner asks the newcomer to consider the remaining items on the liabilities side of the sheet. He or she asks, “Toward whom have you been **SELFISH?**” “Where have

you been **DISHONEST**?" "What about **FALSE PRIDE**—do you feel better than or less than others?" "Are you **JEALOUS** of any relationship?" "Do you **ENVY** anyone's possessions?" "Where have you been **LAZY**?" As each incident comes up, the sponsor or sharing partner adds the name to the right of the specific liability that applies, and, if an amends is agreed upon, he or she circles the appropriate name.

After completing the liabilities side of the checklist, the sponsor or sharing partner unfolds the sheet so that together they can look at the assets side of the ledger. The assets opposite the liabilities with the **LEAST** names are the positive characteristics that the newcomer already has. Those assets opposite the liabilities with the **MOST** names are the qualities that will be strengthened as the newcomer makes the necessary amends.

In our example, the sponsor or sharing partner and the newcomer have put together a list with only a few names to the right of **FALSE PRIDE**, **JEALOUSY**, and **ENVY** and numerous names to the right of **RESENTMENT**, **FEAR**, **SELFISHNESS**, **DISHONESTY** and **LAZINESS**.

The sponsor or sharing partner summarizes the session by saying, "This inventory shows that, for the most part, you are a humble, trusting, and contented person. In addition, you will become more forgiving, loving, unselfish, honest and active as you make amends for your resentments, fears, selfishness, dishonesty and laziness."

We look at assets as well as liabilities because many of us have lost much of our self-esteem and self-worth as the result of

our alcoholism. Even though we've done some very foolish and destructive things while drinking, we will never have to repeat these actions, provided we are willing to admit our faults and correct them. If we are genuinely sorry, God has already forgiven us. Now, it is time to forgive ourselves.

The "Big Book" authors tell us this on page 70. Starting with the fourth line in the first paragraph, they write:

". . . 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."
(A.A., p. 70, para.1, lines 4-10)

So, it is time to make a searching and fearless moral inventory—time to clean up the wreckage of the past so we can experience the "**miracle of healing.**" We have copies of our assets and liabilities checklist for those who would like to use this format for their Fourth Step.

As we have already said, there is no right or wrong way to do the Fourth and Fifth Steps. Just do them.

Are there any questions?