

Appendix D

EXAMPLE 4TH STEP INVENTORY

Resentment: people and institutions that made or make me angry

Source	Reason/Cause	At Risk/Affects My
My spouse	Judges me. Makes me feel inadequate. Is losing patience with my issues. I resent him/her for how I feel about myself.	Love and intimacy, self-esteem, family relationships (I experience fear, anger)
My spouse	Wants more variety in sex. I am frightened he/she will look elsewhere. I resent feeling like I am not enough.	Love and intimacy, self-esteem, family relationships (I experience fear, anger)
My child	Won't follow directions or accept guidance. Doesn't appreciate me. Acts like he/she hates me. Hurts my feelings. I don't want to be angry but I am.	Fear, self-esteem (pride), family relationships, ambition for others (I am scared for him/her, and I feel hurt, anguish, despair)
The person who molested me	Destroyed my trust in self and others. Affected how I see myself and my place in the world. Damaged my self-esteem and understanding of sex.	Love and intimacy, self-esteem, family relationships (I experience fear, anger)

My Error/My Part	Resolution
<p>Fear and selfishness: I've not been a good partner in many respects. My expectations may be out of line. I need to focus on what I can do, instead of on what he/she is or isn't doing.</p>	<p>Focus on what I can do, instead of what he/she does. Seek the peace and power to be the partner my spouse needs. Admit my mistakes and fix them promptly.</p>
<p>Fear of losing what I have and selfishness: of course I will feel inadequate if I am not agreeing to legitimate and reasonable requests. Why feel so vulnerable (afraid)? What would make me feel safe? Where is my sense of adventure?</p>	<p>Seek the peace and power to address inhibitions (fear). Outside counseling might be appropriate if reasonable requests seem impossible. Fears exist for a reason, and need to be addressed calmly. Be authentic. Make time for love and play. Find the good and the humorous.</p>
<p>Fear for him/her, and also dishonesty: blaming my child for my emotional state. I need to be the adult. Selfishness: I am not seeing life through his/her eyes because I want him/her to see things my way. My child is hurt by my rejection of his/her point of view.</p>	<p>Get outside help. Seek the peace and power to let go of the negative feelings that stand in the way of being useful to him/her. Understand and empathize with his/her views. Be grateful for what is right. Find the positive. Talk to friends. Be the parent he/she needs. Set reasonable expectations.</p>
<p>Blaming my current attitudes and limitations on damage suffered long ago. Failing to take responsibility for my recovery. I was a victim, but I do not need to stay one.</p>	<p>Consider discussing the situation with authorities: use anger to serve the greater good and work to protect others, especially if there is still risk of harm to children or others. Amends can be made to those who have been silenced by abuse, rather than to the abuser, since amends made to an abuser may be taken as condoning the abuse.</p>

Fear: things that frightened or still frighten me

Source	Reason/Cause	At Risk/Affects My
Death	I don't feel done with life yet. Others depend upon me.	Life itself
Abandonment	I think my family and friends may desert me.	Self-esteem, family relationships
Self-betrayal/ Loss of self	I have failed myself so many times.	Peace, freedom, happiness, purpose
Gaining (or losing) weight	I think if I eat whatever I want I will gain (or lose) an excessive amount of weight. It has happened before!	Self-esteem, ability to work program, health, life, sexual and other relationships
Sexual intimacy and/ or overactive sex drive (loss of control)	Sometimes I don't even like being with myself. At other times, I worry that my life might turn into a hedonistic nightmare: I might injure those I love.	Self-esteem, integrity, relationships with others

My Error/My Part	Resolution
Selfishness: Not making the most of the time I have here. Not being grateful for the opportunity to make a positive difference.	Seek a perspective that will help me take care of myself: rest, eat, drive safely, and do the right things. Act with love.
Dishonesty (drama and hand-wringing): I can only control what I do, not what happens to me. Worrying instead of being useful.	Ensure that I do not abandon them. I cannot control whether anyone else abandons me.
If this happens, it will be because I have lost perspective. The more I practice a positive perspective the stronger I will be.	Keep working the Steps and daily practices to create and maintain a calm outlook and balanced perspective.
Lack of trust in myself, my body, and my God, Higher Power or higher purpose: I know my body may not be perfect, but I realize it is working hard to keep me healthy.	I will trust that keeping my emotional life free of obstacles (so I can better serve my Higher Power/higher purpose) enables me to find and keep in balance with food. I will trust that my body will let me know what it needs, and I will listen to it without fear, judgment, or second-guessing. I will live authentically.
Dishonesty: Basic human needs include physical intimacy and release. Restriction and rigidity are hallmarks of fear: signs of that I do not trust my Higher Power/higher purpose to keep me (and those I love) safe.	As I continue to live up to my Step 3 commitment, I will lose my fear of self and others. It is important to my health that I can be safe in, and enjoy, intimate relationships. I can behave with integrity and authenticity without harming anyone.

Fear: things that frightened or still frighten me (continued)

Source	Reason/Cause	At Risk/Affects My
Exercise (either too much or too little)	I have hurt myself before. Now I am concerned that I may go too far in the other direction. It is confusing!	Self-esteem, ability to work program, health, life, relationships with others
Letting go of my eating disorder/ loss of control	I think if I let go of my eating disorder, my whole life may run amok. What will I do with all those unmanageable emotions? I might injure myself, or others, in novel and horrifying ways. At least the eating disorder is "safe." I want to feel in control. It does not feel safe to let go of control.	Self-esteem, ability to work the program of EDA, health, life, financial security, sexual and other relationships
Letting go of excess food	I am scared that I will be miserable if I have to restrict my food to recover. I have always been miserable when I try to eat healthily. I don't want to be miserable.	Hope of recovery, willingness and ability to work the program of EDA, self-esteem, health, life, relationships

My Error/My Part	Resolution
<p>Dishonesty: Basic human needs include physical exercise. Excess exercise and exercise avoidance both signal that I need more perspective to guide my thinking.</p>	<p>Listen to my body and talk with medical professionals to define a sane approach to exercise. Watch out for rigidity. Focus on service.</p>
<p>Dishonesty: Although I may feel in control, I know it is an illusion. My eating disorder is not safe at all, and I now trust that if I follow the suggestions and examples of people in recovery, <i>I can be free and safe</i>. If I choose to follow suggestions, I am still in the driver's seat. I may be surrendering to a new perspective, but I am the only one who can do this. The choice is mine alone, and I can choose to return to my eating disorder any time it looks like a better option than recovery.</p>	<p>I resolve to rely on the bigger picture (Higher Power/higher purpose) to provide context for my life and my struggles, so that they do not overwhelm me. I know I can turn to the peace that my new perspective brings at any time; it is with me always and can remove my fear of mismanaging my food, weight, body, relationships, work, and life. I can tell the truth, live my truth, and let go of the outcomes.</p>
<p>Dishonesty: I am already miserable! Life is better without having an eating disorder. I can see that in people who have recovered. I can find comfort, soothing, and safety in food, when I know I can find comfort, soothing, and safety in reliance on a Higher Power/higher purpose. Also, I know I do not have to "restrict"—I can eat whatever I want, whenever I want, so long as I <i>eat only when hungry, and stop when moderately full</i>.</p>	<p>Even though I am frightened, and I know there will be a transitional period that will be difficult while I am learning to what to do to stay safe, I made a decision to take the Twelve Steps, because <i>I want to be free</i>. I am willing to go through being miserable for a while if it means I get to live in peace and freedom. I want to be happy. And I can be happy. Excess food does not make me happy in the long run.</p>

Self-pity: reasons I felt or feel sorry for myself

Source	Reason/Cause	At Risk/Affects My
Lousy role models	Don't like—but feel doomed to repeat—patterns from family of origin. Same with spouse: his/her examples are no better.	Self-esteem, family relationships (I feel fear)
Health	Impacts from past behaviors now limit what I can do physically.	Ambition, pride, self-esteem, family and social relationships (I feel remorse)
Burden of past	I have so much to make up for, I don't think I'll ever feel like a good parent or spouse.	Self-esteem, love and intimacy, family relationships (I feel remorse)
Crappy job	I don't like my job but I need it.	Self-esteem, pride, finances, ambition, family relationships (I feel anger, fear)
Feel like a terrible parent	My kids don't confide in me very much.	Self-esteem (pride), ambition to be an excellent mother/father, family relationships

My Error/My Part	Resolution
<p>Fear: Hand-wringing instead of action. My actions are the product of my thinking and my choices. These are not written in my genes.</p>	<p>Remember no one is doomed to repeat the past. Every day is an opportunity to change everything. Act deliberately, not from fear.</p>
<p>Fear: Focusing on, and worrying about, “what is not” instead of being grateful for “what is.” Hand-wringing.</p>	<p>Remember none of us get out alive, and many “normal” people have health issues. Be grateful for what I have, instead of worrying about what I lack.</p>
<p>Fear and losing perspective: worrying about how I will feel, instead of concentrating on and seeking power to do what I need to do.</p>	<p>Rely more on greater purpose, and focus on today. Be of cheerful service. Be grateful for what I have. Find the positive in everyone.</p>
<p>Self-seeking: Instead of making the most of what I have, I complain about what I don't have.</p>	<p>Look for new job opportunities. Consider additional training. Make the most of what I have. Be the best I can be given the current circumstances. Work on finding the good and the humorous.</p>
<p>Self-seeking: Thinking my kids need to behave in any specific way for me to feel validated as a parent. Dishonesty/drama: I have done a lot wrong, but I am the best parent I know how to be.</p>	<p>Keep working the Steps and look for ways to build and maintain calm and balanced perspective. Be the parent I would have wanted and the parent they need.</p>

Shame: things for which I felt or feel ashamed, though I am not responsible for them

Be sure to include situations where you were bullied or abused, and anything for which you felt or feel embarrassed such as: childhood poverty, your personality (i.e. too introverted/extroverted), your gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or other people's problems.

Source	Reason/Cause	At Risk/ Affects My
The rape	I did not "ask for it" and I did not deserve it, but I still feel dirty and ashamed at times.	Love and intimacy, self-esteem, trust (I experience fear, anger, revulsion)
My children	Poor performance in school and in social relationships. I feel at fault even though I have done everything I could to help them.	Self-esteem, family relationships, social relationships, pride
My sexual orientation	Sometimes the voice in my head echoes the judgment I hear from others. I experience sadness and pain.	Emotional and financial security, self-esteem, social relationships
My ethnicity	I feel excluded/ discriminated against because of my ethnicity.	Self-esteem, pride, social relationships

My Error/My Part	Resolution
<p>Fear: Thinking that I am fundamentally different from others who have been spared this experience. Failing to forgive myself for lapsing into victimhood occasionally, and for not taking full responsibility for my recovery.</p>	<p>Expect that I will still feel trauma at times. Use my experience to help others. Find my voice and advocate for victims' rights.</p>
<p>Selfishness: expecting validation through my children. Fear: Worrying, instead of resolving to do what I can to help them. Worrying too much, period; there is only so much I can do. And actually they are fine, probably more graceful than I was at their ages.</p>	<p>Love them exactly as they are. Continue to focus on what is right. Support them because this isn't about me! Seek counseling for them and for myself if others see issues.</p>
<p>Fear: Thinking ill of myself and others just because key people in my life were unreasonable and judgmental, not because there is anything fundamentally wrong.</p>	<p>Seek the peace and perspective that allows me to accept life on life's terms. I cannot change who I am and I cannot change what others think, but I can change my own judgmental and critical thinking.</p>
<p>Fear: Worrying about how I feel instead of what I can do to change the here and now for the better.</p>	<p>No one is doomed by association. Be the best person I can be. Find the courage to fight for peace and justice.</p>

Guilt: wrongs I have done or am doing to others

Be sure to include lies, cheating (including infidelity), theft (including non-payment of taxes), property damage, and any emotional or physical damage done to others.

Source	Reason/Cause	At Risk/ Affects My
Spouse	I don't prioritize time with him/her. He/she suffers and feels unloved. I blamed him/her for my emotional states.	Love and intimacy (I feel fear), family relationships, spouse's emotional health
Children	I judge them harshly and overreact to fears regarding what they do and don't do. I set a bad example. I lose my temper. I yell. I whine and complain. I withdraw. I do the wrong things. I blame them for my emotional states.	Children's health, family relationships, my self-esteem
Ex-spouse	I cheated on him/her, and then did not honor a renewed commitment to respect our marriage vows once he/she knew of the affair.	Love and intimacy (I feel fear), self-trust, trust with current spouse

My Error/My Part	Resolution
<p>Fear and selfishness, drama: All-or-nothing thinking. Expecting that if I spend time with my spouse he/she will come to demand it, and I will not feel good about myself because I already feel so guilty. I fear I will not want to spend more time with him/her. Fear of change and of losing what I have prevents me from doing the right things.</p>	<p>Seek the peace and power to turn this around. Plan to spend time with spouse. Be kind, loving, grateful for what we have. I love his/her sense of humor and perspective. Take responsibility for my own thoughts and actions: how I feel is the result of how I think. What I think is my choice. His/her choices are his/her business.</p>
<p>Dishonesty, fear, and selfishness: I demand better behavior from my children than I was capable of at their ages. I have been unreasonable and judgmental. Fear and dishonesty, drama: Behaving erratically because I lose sight of what matters. For my children, that is safety, dependability, love, and acceptance.</p>	<p>Seek the peace and perspective to stop judging. Focus on what is good. Love them where they are now, and be grateful. Try to see things from their perspective. Be honest about my failings, apologize, and resolve to correct my mistakes. Keep doing the next right thing. Find the positive. Cut the drama.</p>
<p>Dishonesty: Any clandestine relationship is based on deceit. Allowed my need for validation, and my libido, to overwhelm the conscious commitment I made to my ex-spouse. Unrealistic expectations of spouse, and unwillingness to admit the truth about myself. Arrogance: Did not seek therapy to understand what was behind my error.</p>	<p>Resolve not to take current spouse for granted. Be grateful for the intimacy we have. Do not allow any friendships or fantasies to come between us: our relationship is paramount. Respect my physical needs. Make an effort to give more than I get. <i>If tempted, work all the harder with others, for it quiets the imperious urge, when to yield would mean heartache.</i>¹</p>

¹ *Alcoholics Anonymous*. (2001) New York, NY: AA World Services, Inc., 70.

Confusion: situations where I felt or still feel abandoned or bewildered

Source	Reason/Cause	At Risk/Affects My
Parents	Did not believe me when I told them of the abuse. Did not protect me from my molester.	Love and intimacy, self-esteem, ability to trust, family relationships (I experience fear, anger)
Sibling(s)	Humiliated and belittled me. Scared me for fun. Told on me.	Self-esteem, ability to trust, family relationships
Spouse	Can't help me, despite his/her love and willingness to do so. Sometimes gets angry with me. Sometimes doesn't pay attention to me.	Love and intimacy, family relationships
Self	Tried to follow directions (of sponsors, therapists treatment programs, pastors, mentor and Twelve Steps,) but failed utterly. I abandoned myself.	Life itself, self-esteem, ambition for usefulness, happiness, peace, freedom (the Promises)

My Error/My Part	Resolution
<p>I expected and deserved something better than I got. Expected my parents, especially my mother, to understand and empathize with me. Blamed them for my troubles. I cannot change the past, nor change the mistakes that others made—or are still making. I can, however, make use of my experience to help others.</p>	<p>Imagine what I would have wanted my parents to do when I told them I had been abused. Then do those things, one thing at a time, with as much dignity as I can find. Be the parent I needed and did not have. Get outside support to work through the anger and grief. Forgive. Commit not to abandon myself now.</p>
<p>Selfishness: Expected my sibling(s) to come to my defense and aid, mostly because they usually did so. We are all only human and even the best among us sometimes fail.</p>	<p>Forgive. Sibling(s) were suffering, too, and they did the best they could. I have no right to judge. I don't need sibling(s) to provide for me now. Instead, I commit not to abandon my family members.</p>
<p>Selfishness, self-seeking, and dishonesty: Depending on my spouse to solve my problems. He/she has plenty of his/her own, and my attitudes and behavior are among them. Depending too much on others for things I should take care of myself.</p>	<p>My spouse loves me and is doing his/her level best to show me every day. I am grateful. None of us are perfect. I commit to forgive his/her imperfections, to forgive myself for expecting perfection, and to do my best to show my love for my spouse every day.</p>
<p>Dishonesty: Black-and-white, all-or-nothing thinking. It was rational not to trust when there was no basis for it, but now there is a new basis. Now I trust in the power that active reliance on a higher purpose provides, and I don't have to stay stuck and confused.</p>	<p>I am on a surer footing, relying on a purpose greater than myself to help me build and keep perspective, so I can be at peace and do the next right thing. I have the power to be the peace I want to see in the world.</p>

Frustration: things that made or make me angry, even if I had or have no resentment in connection to them

Source	Reason/Cause	At Risk/Affects My
Self	I often do not do what I know I should.	Self-esteem, self-trust, family relationships, social relationships
Others	Other people often refuse to see things my way.	Self-esteem, family and social relationships, ambition
Inability to understand what I am feeling when I am first feeling it	When I first feel an uncomfortable emotion, I don't know what it is or why I am feeling it. I certainly cannot express myself.	Pride, self-esteem, family relations, ambition (fear of not being able to express myself at work, with loved ones)

My Error/My Part	Resolution
<p>Dishonesty (perfectionism) and focus on the negative: Rather than being grateful for what I can do and how well I do it, I get hung up on what I have not done “correctly.”</p>	<p>Be grateful to be able to do what I do and for what I do well. Accept that I will not always do as well as I would like. Tell the truth and admit my errors. Find humor. Turn thoughts to how to be more helpful to others.</p>
<p>Selfishness and dishonesty (dependency): My life and happiness should not hinge on what others think. Depending heavily on others for validation is unreasonable and sets me up for frustration.</p>	<p>Let go of expectations of others. Let service to the greater good provide the validation I need. I can show up, do the work, tell the truth, and let go of the outcomes.</p>
<p>Dishonesty (pride): Thinking this is abnormal or wrong. Usually I've neglected something basic: hunger, anger, loneliness, tiredness (HALT).</p>	<p>Build trust with myself to get and stay safe until I can process my emotions. If I take care of basics, reason will return.</p>

Despair: reasons for hopelessness, past and present

Source	Reason/Cause	At Risk/Affects My
Eating disorder	Kept failing at re-recovery, despite doing everything I thought I needed to do.	Life itself, self-esteem, ambition for usefulness, happiness, peace, freedom (the Promises)
Self	Spent much of my life looking at things from a narrow and constrained context. How can I now think I will be able to change in such a fundamental way?	Life itself (fear), self-esteem, ambition for usefulness, happiness, peace, freedom (the Promises)
Children	Sure I did so many wrong things and passed on so many terrible genetic and attitudinal issues that my children are doomed to be miserable.	Self-esteem, family relationships, children's emotional health

My Error/My Part	Resolution
<p>Dishonesty: Not willing to be completely honest with myself about what was and wasn't working for me. "Bring the body and the mind will follow" did not work. The Steps do not work through osmosis!</p>	<p>I cannot change the past, but I can change today. Rely on higher purpose to help me commit to honor my truth and take care of myself, so that I may serve those around me and the greater good to the best of my ability.</p>
<p>Dishonesty (drama): Still thinking from such a limited context, and hand-wringing (drama). Black-and-white thinking. Should think instead of how much of my life is still ahead of me. I have choices each and every day to think and act differently.</p>	<p>Seek the peace and power to live each day carefully and deliberately, being grateful for the opportunity to be of cheerful service to the greater good and those around me. Take care of the basics. Work to stay in balance so I can be of service without drama.</p>
<p>Fear and dishonesty (judgmental and untrusting): Failing to see and respect the strength, goodwill, and good sense in my children.</p>	<p>Share my joy and appreciation for life with them. Share what is working for me. Live each day grateful for and respectful of my children and their choices. Their lives are up to them, and they have the exact same opportunity to find peace and joy that I have.</p>

Completing the 4th Step Inventory does not mean that we are "done" with Step Four. Please refer back to Chapter 5 for guidance.