

## Step Four Need Not be a Saga.

Exposing the Root of Our Faulty Behaviors

By Rick R.

The subjects that we need to address in step four are the faulty behaviors that caused us to damage our relationships with other people and to get down to the core issues which caused us to behave the way we did. It is not necessary to drag these episodes out Ad nauseum. On page 65 in the Big Book, it starts the process with the word Resentment. This is just the first topic we will address in our inventory but not the last. Some others may deal with subjects such as: *Gossip, Dishonesty, Selfishness, Neglect, Character Assassination, etc.* These issues are our natural instincts, for protection, far exceeding their intended purpose. More topics will be revealed as you fill in the “why we did these things” part of this step. I would have one page for each of these matters and as a new issue came up, I would open another page. I would start with the most obvious person I had a resentment for and try to determine the cause and effect of these behaviors, and once I discovered why I felt threatened by this person or issue, I could deal with it at that level then I would move on to the next person on the list and so on. After going through three or four of these people I found that I was repeating myself and I would move to the next topic. I see that most of these fears stem from my own insecurity, for example: I was talking to a friend awhile back and I questioned how we could talk about another person without it be considered Gossip? His response was life changing for me when he said: “*All forms of Criticism and Character Assassination stem from low self-esteem.*” *The Low Self-esteem was the Defect of Character, and The Criticism and Character Assassination were the Shortcoming.*(faulty behaviors) To put it in simpler terms let’s say you just purchased a brand-new SUV and drove away from the dealership and as you approach the first stop sign you hit the brakes and the car didn’t stop properly and drifted out into the intersection. You carefully drive the car back to the dealership and explain what happened and the salesman said, the mechanic will check it out and see what went wrong. Shortly there-after the salesman returned and explains that they put the wrong break-pads on the car, and they would have them replaced and it should be fine. You get the car back and drive off and when you reach the first stop sign it stops perfectly and it stops perfectly in all the other stop signs that you approach. The defect was the faulty brakes and the failure to stop was the short-coming. *Once the defect was corrected, the short-coming went away. The defect was the cause and the shortcomings were the effect. If we simply look at our irrational fears and insecurities as the defects in every case, we can get through step four quickly and I find it best to add any new shortcomings, as they become obvious, to an additional page and expose them to the light.* Without a thorough fourth and fifth step I can’t see any way that a person can do the rest of the steps with those tormenting Ghosts of yesterday still rattling around in their head. They may never drink another drop of alcohol, but they may never rid themselves of those corrosive mental issues and miss out on, what I see as, the most important promise in the program and that is, Peace of Mind. Ridding ourselves of the root causes of our behaviors is the solution to our mental unrest and, in time, we will develop a life of credibility and integrity and above all, a clear conscience. It gets easier as we move forward and get right with ourselves and the world around us.