

Step Ten: Continued to Take Personal Inventory.

Examine My Motives for All That I Do.

By Rick R.

If someone were to ask me what brought me to the doors of AA my answer would be: "Alcohol had got the best of me, I was desperately circling the drain, and I didn't want to die young". Not everyone that comes to AA had that degree of desperation. I got sober on October 15th, 1969 and that was just before Alcoholics were being offered Rehabilitation clinics. Up to that point most of our members who came here have been looking for answers. The success rate at that time, according to the foreword to the second addition of the (Big Book), Alcoholics Anonymous, it says that 50% of those who came here looking for answers got sober and never drank again 25% got sober after a few relapses and stayed that way and the other 25% showed improvement. To me, 75% sounds like a surprisingly good ratio of success. The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking. (Tradition Three) Not everyone who came to AA from the Court System or from a Rehab environment has the same amount of desperation as those original members had. This does not mean that they were not invited back, for we treat them with respect but a significant percentage of them did relapse and we welcome them back with open arms so as not to be considered an AA failure and eventually many of them did stay sober. Through of the desperation is often consistent with the depth of thoroughness a person is willing to go through as he takes the steps and when I was faced with the suggestion that I do a Fearless and Thorough Moral Inventory in the fourth step, I began to resist and did what I would call a shallow facade just to get my ticket punched. Being in the Navy at the time I was abruptly flown out to the western Pacific during the Vietnam War and assigned to a tanker replenishing fuel on ships in the Tonkin gulf Fleet and I had four months to think about what I was going to do on my returned home. My conscience told me to discard my original inventory and do it right the second time around. That I think, is what made the rest of this program easy for me. Accepting accountabilities for all those disgusting behaviors of the past and to make restitution has been the answer to all those alcoholic behaviors in the past. If we have completed a good 4th and 5th step and again on the 8th and 9th step, how do we approach the tenth step which suggest that we continue to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

Early in my sobriety my wife came home from an Al-Anon meeting excited about the topic they shared. She said that "We should examine our motives for all the things we do" and that made perfect sense to me. I have been living a life based on Unselfish Principles and never finished examining my motives. All my out-side behaviors (short-comings) are the result of my thinking (motives) and so long as I am willing to continue this path it has taken all the fight out of me. Selfishness--self-Centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles. Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity we step on the toes of our fellows, and they retaliate. (BB pg. 62) What a Profound statement! Living a life based upon Unselfish Motives has restored my self-esteem and the final and most important result is peace of mind. Never thought that would happen!!! This is my understanding of Step Ten.