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WE CANNOT TEACH OLD DOGS NEW TRICKS - However, we are not old dogs, nor is our Alcoholics Anonymous Program or our Workbooks a trick. This system is not trading one addiction for a less harmful one. It is not one substitution, although it appears to be just that. It's for disempowering old, useless, and unhealthy habits; more importantly, it is to empower living, loving, and Spiritual principles into our daily life. A Spiritual Principle increases in value and usefulness with its use, while our ego and material stuff deteriorate with use. We can learn Spiritual Principles at any age if we believe we can and do our little part.

DISEMPOWERING HABITS - It takes as much or more skill to disempower an old habit as it does to build a new, useful one. Our Twelve-Step Program is a way by which we can replace an old habit with a new one. Although it is simple, it will not be easy. Anything we repeat long enough and often enough will become a habit, and we will get good at it. The physical brain does utilize millions and sometimes billions of brain cells for each habit. Most of the habits we choose to change have a mental, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual side. With this Program, we can address each of these areas by disempowering an old habit and empowering a new one. Our old habits became our personal "reality". This personal "reality" is the way we each experience our world.

We need to reclaim the power we have given to our harmful, useless, and overly limiting habits and invest it in new ones. If you are willing to do whatever it takes to practice this Program in all your affairs, you will be incredibly pleased. The cost will be a consistent focus on empowering the new habit and disempowering the old habit every time it comes into your consciousness. This takes a real commitment to practice the following suggestions: "Half measures avail us nothing." **The Twelve-Step Program of Alcoholics Anonymous is an excellent solution to most of the problems we may experience in this human condition.** This is a healing solution, not limited to our primary addiction or alcoholism. Each time we apply this process to an area, we are learning to PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.

Al Kohallek Goes Stepping 6th Edition Program is designed as a guide through the Twelve Steps. Our goal is to work through this complete Workbook, the first 164 pages of the book Alcoholics Anonymous, and the Twelve Steps of the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. The benefits are well worth whatever it takes. Once you begin, stay with the process even if it takes more than forty days. Do not short-cut or jump a day's complete assignment.

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DAY I - Today is _____

**CAUTION: THIS COULD BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR OLD WAY OF LIFE.
USE THIS WORKBOOK, OR ANY OF ITS CONTENTS, AT YOUR OWN RISK**

Doing what's suggested in this workbook may cause you to let go of some parts of your personal "reality." It could result in fewer limitations for you. You may stop blaming other people, places, and things. You may stop being a user and become an owner of your stuff. You may find yourself giving up some of your old resentments, pains, and fears. You could even find yourself with a new understanding and awakening. You could find yourself. The contents in this workbook are for sharing. Pass it on freely to those you love and those you don't.

Day One Action:

1. Read the introduction information – highlight or underline what is important to you
2. Today's reading assignment from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is the Foreword (pages 15–18). Average reading time: 7 minutes. – Highlight what is most important to you.
3. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is the Preface and all the Forewords (Fourth Edition pages xi – xxiii), with an average reading time of 24 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
4. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you are working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.

OUR MISSION - We will introduce you to a set of practical tools; however, tools are worthless unless we learn how to use them and then apply them effectively. Well, that's what this little workbook is about. Learning new ways to expand our application of the program is our focus. To help you awaken to the powerful spiritual principles embodied in the Twelve Steps (Recovery), Twelve Traditions (Unity), and Twelve Concepts for World Service (Service). The focus of this Workbook will be on the Twelve Steps. *Awakening*, we believe, is the correct word because it does happen as the result of applying the spiritual principles. We aim to dispel the misconception that we can impose an understanding by applying the principles of our program. We use information and knowledge to help chip away at all that is not our God-created self, thereby opening and realizing our Spiritual Gifts, our true nature, as embodied in Step Twelve. The first Spiritual gift, ***"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps..."*** The second Spiritual gift, ***"...we tried to carry this message."*** The third Spiritual gift, ***"...and to practice these principles in all our affairs."***

INTRODUCTION TO A FORTY-DAY COMMITMENT

The use of forty days as a time to effect a change has been around for a long time. Using forty days for a transformation places us in some powerful company:

- Noah's life was transformed by 40 days of rain.
- Moses was transformed by 40 days on Mount Sinai.
- The spies were transformed by 40 days in the Promised Land.
- David was transformed by Goliath's 40-day challenge.
- Elijah was transformed when God gave him 40 days of strength from a single meal.
- The entire city of Nineveh was transformed when God gave the people 40 days to change.
- Jesus was empowered by 40 days in the wilderness.
- The disciples were transformed by 40 days with Jesus after his resurrection.

If we want to build a new habit, and if we consistently practice for forty days, we are well on the way to a new or different lifelong habit. There is no doubt that there is a spiritual purpose in (doing) a 40-day process of change. Still, we will see how we can experience transformations at other levels as well - mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially.

This human condition we live in has many cycles; women are aware of the physical 28-day cycle; however, men also go through a 28-day physical cycle. This 28-day cycle for men is different, but there are some parts of this cycle that all humans have in common. For example, at times we feel full of energy and love just doing physical stuff, and at other times we feel physically drained of energy for no identifiable reason. We suggest implementing cycles at other levels. For example, there are times when we are overflowing with new ideas. At other times, we are alert mentally, and at other times, we can hardly remember our names. What about the times when we are so emotionally sensitive, positive or negative, that we feel separated from our “reality,” and at other times we don’t feel much of anything? What about the times we want to be social and other times we need to be alone?

This brings us to an important point. We believe that we pass through these 40-day cycles as a regular part of this human condition. In building a new habit and then practicing that want consistently for forty days, we are practicing it through a set of regular cycle changes. This means that we would experience this want through the highs, lows, and in between. We can take any of life's experiences and realize that we react differently as we pass through these regular cycles.

Most of us have experienced what I call resistance movement while we were working through a growth process. When we decide to make a fundamental change in our personal “reality”, our resistance at one level or another pops up. We begin to see this same problem all around us, at times seemingly getting worse, or it feels like we have stirred a beehive and have managed to make the bees angry. At times, we may feel elated with the possibility of a new, enlightened understanding. At other times, we are angry at others or ourselves. At times, we fear changing, or we fear not changing. At times, we may feel we are nearing an early close, and we want to stand on a rooftop and declare victory. At other times, it seems like it will never end. At times, we know something important is on the verge of coming out, but it doesn't. If we are willing even for an instant to surrender all to the process, a break happens, and we awaken. Nothing is ever the same.

Many of us once thought the sole object of our Program was to overcome difficulties and problems. To limit our Program to problem fixing only is like judging the power and abundance of the ocean by a few empty shells on the beach. Knowledge and understanding of the Program can be helpful tools if we put them to work. The real object of our Program is to seek and find a Higher Power that will do for us that we cannot do for ourselves. In turn, it will help us awaken, to realize, to develop our own higher faculties and powers. In other words, His will is individualized through each of us. Learning and awakening are but the preparation for a life filled with joy, happiness, and freedom, in other words, to be our created Self.

An overview: First, let us review the Forty-Day Commitment’s papers, which will give us an overview of what we are asked to commit to. Then we will have to decide if we are willing to make a total commitment to work through this process. We may be asking questions like: What is it? How does it work? What’s it in for me? Is it for me?

What is it? It is a forty-day program designed to guide us through all the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. “A.A.’s Twelve Steps are a group of principles, spiritual in their nature, which, if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole.” Foreword to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

How does it work? It is suggested that we work on this process for at least one hour per day, every day for forty days. Yes, this includes weekdays, weekends, and holidays. Devoting forty hours to a life-changing process is an excellent investment. When we are building a new habit, it is helpful to be consciously consistent. The habits we are seeking to replace run 24/7. Another vital reason to work consistently on this life-changing process is that we will find a solution. We will see, after a few days, as we are doing our standard day-to-day stuff, a vital insight will come to mind about the area we are focusing on in this forty-day process. As these insights pop up, write or record a keyword or two. This will help us restore this insight later. We suggest that you carry something to write with or record on while working on this Program. Each day, we will have a daily assignment with suggestions and tips. Finish this day’s assignment before we go to the next. This means that some days we may invest more or less than an hour.

Plan of Action. To expand on our first suggestion, set aside at least one hour a day. Make this a firm commitment. Let everyone know that we would love to have freedom from all distractions, including the telephone, while working on this Forty-Day program. We ask that you start your day's practice with the provided affirmation or create your own. We believe it is helpful to ask for guidance from your Higher Power on awakening and starting the day's assignment.

Each of the Twelve Steps has a special meaning in this healing Program. The order of the Steps is for a good reason; we suggest that you work them in order. Each Step prepares us for the next Step in the process. We're tempted to pair some of the Steps with other Steps and work them as one. For example, some of our members will do their 4th Step and 5th Step together, as if these were one Step. We believe that for the best results, it's best to take one step at a time. They have more depth, which means there's a better chance of being honest. Many view the 6th Step and 7th Step as one Step. We will experience the difference when we treat them as two individual steps. Combining the 8th and 9th steps into one causes a special problem.

What's it in me? If we commit ourselves to this forty-day process, we will never be the same. We will create a set of Spiritual Tools that can be applied in every area of our lives to enrich them. We will likely gain a new depth. So, we ask ourselves, is it for me? The only way to answer that question is to go through this process the best we can here/now, giving it a fair chance to bring us more happiness, peace, and joy.

What will we need to get started? **WE WILL NEED A COPY OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS (The Big Book), A COPY OF THE BOOK TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS, and A COPY OF THIS WORKBOOK** (Like all our workshops, papers, and workbooks, this workbook is free. Contact Jim W. 16607 Blanco Road, Suite 401, San Antonio, Texas 78232-1940: email jwillis257@aol.com. You may download these books for free by going to our website www.12stepworkbook.org. For additional information, contact our office. A copy of both Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book) and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions can be purchased at a local A.A. Central Service Office or Intergroup Office. These two A.A. textbooks are available in hardback, soft-cover, and CD formats. The Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, and the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions can be read online – <http://aa.org>. They both have a wealth of helpful information, so it would serve us well to have our own copy. The Textbook Reference page numbers for the Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous) will be from the Fourth Edition. As we read our assignments, underline, highlight, or take notes on those ideas most important to us individually. **WE WILL NEED SOMETHING TO WRITE ON AND SOMETHING TO WRITE WITH.**

NOTE: The page numbers may differ according to the printing dates. If this is the case, use the Chapter titles instead of the page numbers.

It is important that we read all the suggested assignments. We could say we are filling up our toolbox, which can be useful for the rest of our lives in every area. For each of these suggested readings, we have noted an estimated average time to read that assignment. This will give us an idea of how long the reading will take in a group setting or when reading out loud. This is slower than the average silent reading.

“At some of these, we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas, and the result was nil until we let go absolutely. Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked for His protection and care with complete abandon. Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery:” pages 58 – 59, Alcoholics Anonymous. Reprinted with permission.

**WHEN YOU UNCOVER OR DISCOVER HABITS OF THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS
SOMETIMES CALLED DEFECTS OR ASSETS, POST THEM ON PAGE 86**

DAY 2 - Today is _____

Michelangelo took a rough piece of marble and chipped away everything that did not look like the vision of David he held in his mind. Working this Program to the best of your ability will help you chip away at what doesn't align with your Higher Power's vision for you. You may experience your heart's desire, His Will.

Day Two Action:

1. Workbook Reading - An Eye (I) Witness Account and Useful Information. Highlight what is most important to you.
2. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is The Doctor's Opinion - Average reading time 15 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you. (Fourth Edition pages xxv - xxxii)
3. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you are currently working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.

Today's Mission Statement: The healing process begins when we can admit, accept, and realize that we need help. Alone and unaided with our present level of understanding, habits of thought and feeling, in other words, our little personal "reality", we are powerless. We are unable to escape the confines of this box, let alone transcend it. We realize that we cannot consistently manage our thoughts, feelings, or actions in this area. If we are to get out of this box, we need someone or something higher than, different from, or other than ourselves. Step One describes our problem.

The Doctor's Opinion is crucial to our understanding of the Program's process. It is so important for those who have any addiction to understand the phenomenon of craving, which is the manifestation of an allergy. There is a physical difference between those who have an addiction and so-called normal people. "ALLERGY" - The phenomenon of physical craving that kicks in with the first drink of alcohol, slice of cake, pill, or any drug. This craving is limited to those with a chemical addiction. (Six Essential Characteristics, page 25) The Doctor's Opinion and the first four chapters of Alcoholics Anonymous address Step One and Step Two.

An Eye (I) Witness Account

WHO IS AL KOHALLEK? Al Kohallek (Alcoholic), his wife, Allienon (Al Anon), and Al's sponsor Lou-is Pazeniton (Lou is passing it on) are the main characters in our examples. We will share part of their journey through this process and way of life. We changed their names to protect the guilty and the innocent. This couple and Lou-is represent only three of some eighteen (18) million people using a Twelve-Step Program for a solution to a wide range of human dis-ease. The General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous was reporting a little over three million active members in AA. This means that around fifteen (15) million people around the world were using this way of life for something other than alcoholism. We do not believe that these fifteen (15) million people are using this way of life because they admire alcoholics, nor would they choose to become an alcoholic as a great way to a spiritual path or awakening. It would be safe to say most of those who find their way to the program had tried other pathways first. Al and Allienon, like most others, were driven to seek help from their pain, frustration, despair, and emptiness caused by repeated failures. By the Grace of God, they heard about the program working for others, and they chose to join us. They have found that, "It works, it really does."

AL SHOWS UP - When we first meet Al, he has problems. Many problems! He found a description of himself on almost every page of the Big Book. Page 52 nailed him: "We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were a prey to misery and depression, we couldn't make a living, we had a feeling of uselessness, we were full of fear, we were unhappy, we couldn't seem to be of real help to other people." (The reverse of these bedevilments showed up in the Promises on pages 83-84). "When we saw others solve their problems by a simple reliance on the Spirit of the Universe, we had to stop doubting the power of God. Our ideas did not work. But the God idea did." (Reprinted with permission.)

AS YOU CHOOSE - Once there was a wise man who lived in a small village. There also lived a guy who was jealous of the wise man, and he was hell-bent on showing him up. One day, this guy took a group of witnesses to confront the wise man. This guy had a small bird in his closed fist. He said to the wise man, "If you are so wise, tell me this: Is the bird I have in my hand dead or alive?" The wise man knew that if he answered that the bird was alive, this guy would squeeze it to death, and if he answered that it was dead, he would open his hand and let it fly away. The wise man replied, "It is as you choose." And so, it is with this way of life, this program.

GOING BEYOND THE ENTRY-LEVEL - There are endless levels that are available to each of us in this program. Based on spiritual principles, which are ever-expanding, our power lies in our decisions and our willingness to follow through with whatever action we're directed to carry out. We believe that all humans, in or out of the program, settle for far too little. We pray that each of us continue to choose to grow, to awaken to Higher Levels. After the first level, you will find some useful free downloads of Workshops online at www.12stepworkbook.org or at our office. Al does not know of anyone who consistently lives on the higher levels, but he knows many do get to the higher levels. Some reach this higher level often. Al experiences his human conditions, drawing him back to a lower level, but he has learned to choose once again and to place it in God's hands.

Al identifies with page 164 of the Big Book: "We realize we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and to us. Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come, if your own house is in order. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven't got. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us."

There are three principal attributes at this level. These attributes, the Three Spiritual Gifts, are the theme of this workbook and a fundamental theme of life. These Three Spiritual Gifts are:

- 1. The Awakening to the Presence of our Higher Power and to be in conscious union with this Presence.**
- 2. The Awakening to the Love that we are, that all of us are.**
- 3. The Awakening to the individual Self we were created to be, with purpose and meaning. In other words, to consciously live Our Heart's Desire, God's Will.**

We believe that these Three Spiritual Gifts are our true nature, and we shall never be whole until these are realized. As we continue through this workbook, we will have much more to say about these Gifts, the reasons behind them, and how to access them. We dedicate this workbook to that end. This process helps awaken us at a place where we have always been, Our Father's House. Welcome Home!

Whose JOB IS IT? What we can do is our responsibility. How do we know if we can or cannot? We try. Everything else is God's responsibility.

YOUR CHOICE - Many of us choose to live in darkness with our eyes closed, our ears stuffed, our fists tightly closed, grasping nothing. We had a closed mind focused on self; our emotions were fed with yesterday's self-centered fears. We abused our physical bodies and used others selfishly as objects. We looked at people, places, and things for our worth, meaning, and purpose. We went for spiritual junk food because we were so hungry. We tried to control others and ourselves with guilt and punishment. All of that was living apart from our Three Spiritual Gifts.

CHOOSE ONCE AGAIN -If we are willing to open our eyes, unplug our ears, open our hands to both receiving and giving, let our emotions flow in loving energy, and be open channels, we will receive everything we need to awaken. We will find the way and the power to "seek God, clean house, and help others." We do not change the Divine Laws when we plant corn instead of wheat, but we do exercise our power of choice. We can choose, but it is God who creates. So, we choose and leave the results to our Higher Power.

LET'S SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT - We have failed many times, but we are not failures. We have been foolish, but we are not fools. We have done many bad things, but we are not evil. We were once punished and made to feel guilty, and we have done the same to others. Now, we seek correction for both us and others. We have withheld and withdrawn our love and our Spiritual Gifts, and this caused us to believe that others, even God, were doing the same to us.

THE DRUG: GUILT AND PUNISHMENT - The drug of choice for so many otherwise loving, good people is guilt and punishment. It is suggested that we set aside all guilt and punishment for others and ourselves. Guilt and punishment are much like alcohol and other drugs. They give us the illusion that we have done something about the problem; however, we may have a temporary fix at best when, in truth, nothing has changed at the root of our problems, our personal "reality."

We will repeat the same problems until there is real healing. We are asked to seek correction, not guilt and punishment. Remember this: we cannot have an open mind or a new or higher understanding when we are judging. Judging is a form of projecting our old personal "reality," not REALITY.

A REMINDER - When I can't make conscious contact with my Higher Power, one of the things I find helpful is this: I remind myself that the food I ate today is being changed into flesh and bones, thoughts and energy, and all kinds of things. If I had all the money in the world and every kind of resource, including the best brain, I could not reproduce what is going on in the least of us. Yet we have the illusion that we are without recourse to heal our dilemma. If we do the best we can to chip away everything that is not related to our Three Spiritual Gifts, we will be given all that we need for the moment.

WATCH OUT FOR TERMITES - Watch out for the termites, the little day-in, day-out stuff. This is a real present danger. These little guys undermine the foundation of every relationship. Termite destroys more property than all the fires, floods, wind, and hail, and so it is with relationships. We're forced to do something about the "big" problems or run away. With the little bit of stuff, we don't have to do anything, or it's not important enough. In one way or another, we often stuff these. One termite doesn't matter, but when they build up in numbers, watch out. It is best to deal with all problems AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

GIFT OF DENIAL - Denial can be a special gift of grace. Denial does not ask us to address anything until we have the tools. When we have the tools, it breaks down. When that happens, the denial turns to dishonesty if we try to avoid it. Then, it demands our attention.

SIMPLE BUT NOT EASY - Everything is so simple after we have awakened to it and lived it. It is not easy, but it is simple. Trying to simplify things before the awakening can be problematic. Everything is simple when it is simple, but not until then.

KEEP AND OPEN-MIND - Many of us are so fearful of change that we resist anything that is the least bit different from our personal "reality." Anything new or unfamiliar will seem out of place until we have experienced it. "There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments, and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance—that principle is contempt prior to investigation." (Herbert Spencer) Reprinted with permission.

ME AND MY SHADOW - What most of us see is our own little reflection in that limiting mirror of our personal "reality," hearing the hum of our little voice as that "reality." The images we see and the sounds we hear are so familiar, so habitual that we often think and feel that "this" is REALITY. At best, it is but a shadow of our Higher Self.

SAME BEGINNING AND ENDING - We looked at every vital relationship in our life: lover, friends, and business. They all begin and end the same way. All began like this: "If I believe that you believe in me, we have a deal." The beginning of the end is like this: "I no longer believe that you believe I am special." Who's the Source? Not God.

DAY 3 - Today is _____

Day Three Action:

1. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is Bill's Story (Fourth Edition, pages 1-16). Average reading time: 31 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
2. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you are currently working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.

MUST BE PRESENT

This workbook cannot help those who are active in their addictions. We are not aware of any program that can assist these individuals. Perhaps it is as simple as this: When the time comes to face the healing process, these people avoid it with their addiction. Common sense tells us we need to abstain while working on this healing process. The mind that made us sick cannot make us well in its present state, nor under the influence of addiction. We need something higher than us, different from us, other than us, that can and will do for us that we cannot do for ourselves. This is a mind training and Spiritual Awakening Program, so it is important to be consciously present.

Today's Mission Statement: Bill W. is the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. Reading his story will give us a deeper insight into the disease and the solution. We likely identify with parts of his story; reading the whole book will reveal many aspects we can relate to.

Al: I was in Alcoholics Anonymous about six months before I caught this disease of alcoholism. I had never even heard the word "alcoholic" until I came into Alcoholics Anonymous, much less what it meant, but if you ask me if I was one, I will say, sure, maybe the worst one here. I only said that if anyone mentioned my resistance to the Program to my family, they would have to report that I agreed to everything. The more meetings I went to and the more I shared with other Alcoholics Anonymous members, the easier it was for me to identify with other alcoholics. I have come to realize that a big part of Alcoholics Anonymous is our ability to identify with other alcoholics.

WINNERS – LOSERS

We hear in meetings, "stick with the winners." Who are these winners? The winners are those who are living the solution. Who are the losers? The losers are those who are still getting ready for the program (practicing their illness). So, we could say that winners and losers are the same person at different points in the process. A sad fact is that most of those losers never cut. Since you are here, I would suggest that you stay and forgo any additional sick prep work.

FEARLESS AND THOROUGH

We're sure you have heard something like this:

If I had known I was going to be around this long, I would have taken better care of myself. I would have paid heed to the statement from Chapter Five of the Big Book, page 58, ... "we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the start. Some of us tried to hold on to our old ideas, and the results were nil until we let go absolutely." (Reprinted with permission). Our problem needs healing at the level of conditions and causes (our personal "reality"). If not, we will exchange one problem or addiction for another or go back to our old problem. More importantly, we will miss a way of life that can be so fulfilling.

Our Program is compelling, but we can only truly understand its value by experiencing its results in our daily lives. Those of us who have experienced the abundance of life in all areas say, "If I had it to do over, I would ask more of God, more of the program, and more of myself sooner."

DAY 4 - Today is _____

STEP ONE - (HONESTY) WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER ALCOHOL - THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE.

Day Four Action

1. Workbook assignment is working on the Six Essential Characteristics of Alcoholism and other addictions, page 10. Write out your response to the Six Essential Characteristics.
2. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is There Is a Solution (Chapter 2, Fourth Edition, pages 17-29)—average reading time: 24 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
3. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you are currently working on in the Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.
4. Responding to each of the Six Essential Characteristics of alcoholism and other addictions, both substance and non-substance addictions, on page 11, will give you some insights into your disease and point the way to recovery. If we do not get to the conditions and causes of our addictions, we may not get over that addiction, or we may remain dry but may not be joyous, happy, and free about it.

Today's Mission Statement: Today's reading from the Big Book, There Is A Solution, like each of the suggested readings, will add to and enrich our toolbox. What each of us has in common is not only the disease, as is often thought, but also the solution. Everyone has a Special Gift to give to others and themselves. If we could be still and listen to the wisdom of our heart, we would know what that is. The secret of happiness is to understand and use your Special Gift. The secret to abundance is to give your Special Gift to others. If this is true, why are we not experiencing that Special Gift? Most likely, we have created or accepted far too many false illusions. Step One is a foundational tool in this process, designed to help remove illusions and obstacles that block your Special Gift, allowing for natural healing to occur. When we reach a point in our lives where we realize our powerlessness to change with our current understanding and our inability to be still, and if we are willing to seek help, it will come.

ALWAYS START AT STEP ONE

If we have previously found success with our Twelve-Step Program, we recognize it's time to apply it to another area of our lives. At times, we're tempted to jump over the first three Steps and start on another inventory. If we skip the first three Steps, we are likely to achieve significantly less success with the rest of the program. We strongly suggest that when you choose to work on this Program in a "new" area, always start at Step One. We must realize that we cannot, with our present understanding, alone and unaided, experience any real change. We need to realize that we are powerless and cannot manage our lives effectively with our current mindset. The mind that made us sick or limited cannot make us whole or well (Step One).

Al: Once I have admitted that I am powerless and that I cannot manage my life, then why do it again?

Lou-is: Our mind plays tricks on us. This is a good example where we applied the Steps to one area and then generalized that experience to cover all areas of our lives. It would be as if we had achieved some success at our job and then assumed we should automatically be successful in every area of our lives. A new person in the program will often experience highs and lows, directly or indirectly, because of generalization.

INCREASE THE PAIN - We have set up the First Step in a way that will help increase the pain of holding on to that which we need to have changed, healed, or transformed. The questions will contrast back and forth: What will it cost us if we do not change? What can we gain from experiencing change?

Al: I don't want or need any more pain.

Lou-is: Then get busy.

SIX ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS - In general, there are six essential characteristics of alcoholism and other addictions. Being aware of these can help us better understand the path our problems take. These may help raise our “bottom.” In other words, they help our denial breakdown if we are ready. These characteristics apply to most problems, not just chemical addictions, but also sick, harmful, addictive relationships and many others.

The following is used as part of our First Step. The idea is to help raise our “bottom”, in other words, to help break down our denial. We aim to enhance our understanding of the problem's dynamics and increase the discomfort of holding onto it. Skip the first one, “Allergy”, if the area you are working on is an area other than a form of chemical addiction, such as any form of non-substance addictions, i.e., money, sex, work, etc. Respond to each of the questions as they relate to the area you are working in.

SIX ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ALCOHOLISM, AND OTHER ADDICTIONS

1. **ALLERGY** - The phenomenon of physical craving that kicks in with the first drink of alcohol, slice of cake, pill, or any drug. This craving is limited to those with a chemical addiction.

Al: For the first time, I understand that I have an allergy to several chemicals, not only alcohol, which sets up a physical craving for more. I experienced this physical craving after having only a drink, or having smoked, or drinking Dr Pepper.

Question: Have you realized your Triggers? What are they?

2. **PROGRESSIVE** - Tolerance: it takes more to get the job done, or we are unable to get by with what we once did. With non-substance addictions, it takes more money, sex, and work.

Al: The last year that I drank, I had graduated to pints or half pints, telling myself that I would only drink that and no more, but I did. I was fooling myself about my progressing alcoholism. On top of my drinking problem getting worse, so was my insane jealousy problem progressively getting bad, to the point I did not have a moment of peace, which seemed to call for drinking more.

Question: How has your disease progressed? Does it take more, or does it take less to hurt more?

3. **SELF-DELUSION** - Starts with denial, then repression, and then mind games, rationalizing, and then comes the conscious lying. The rationalizing and consciously lying do a job on our trust, self-esteem, respect, and self-respect. At all costs, we must keep our addictive behavior going.

Al: I don't know what I would have done without denial. If I had realized one more failure in the early days of AA, I would have killed myself. When my denial broke down, I could not fool myself about addictions anymore. But by then, I had little or no trust, respect, or self-respect left.

Question: What has your experience with self-delusion been?

4. **DISTORTION OF ATTENTION** - Preoccupied with the object of our addiction or attachment, we cannot think of anything else, but stuff connected with the addiction or the person or thing we are attached to. The

distortion becomes our **ULTIMATE CONCERN**. Another word for it is "idolatry." The addiction becomes our god.

Al: When I was still drinking, I could not stop thinking about where and how my next drink was coming. My obsession with the drink was my ultimate concern, my god. When I was in my jealousy insanity, my obsession was much like my drinking; I had to be reassured that my wife was not with someone, so that I would track her down.

Question: Can you give an example of this thinking and feeling?

5. LOSS OF WILLPOWER - Each time our willpower fails, with our best intentions, we feel even more hopeless, useless, and worthless. The most significant damage to self-esteem comes from repeated failures at trying to change addictive behavior. It hurts when we try our best to stop and cannot.

Al: The last year I drank, I tried everything I could find to do, and I failed to stay stopped. I had held back from a total commitment not to drink for some time, and when I did commit not to drink ever again, I got depressed because I could not stay stopped. As for the insane jealousy, I promised myself and my wife I would never, never, never accuse her of sleeping around again, but I could not keep my promise. Much like my alcoholism, I could not handle my jealousy problem with willpower.

Question: Can you give examples of your loss of willpower?

6. WITHDRAWAL - "They are restless, irritable, and discontented, unless they can again experience the sense of ease and comfort that comes at once by taking a few drinks" or a few bites. Our addiction becomes part of our autonomic nervous system, the more we repeat the behavior. We have sometimes enlisted billions of our body and brain cells. **THE ADDICTION BECOMES OUR "REALITY"**. Our mind says, "Play it again, Sam." When the body/mind is deprived of something it has come to expect, it responds with danger signals, as if something is wrong. Then we have the rebound. There is a natural rebound for the human condition in any growth cycle. We can go just so far, and our personal "reality" tells us to come "home". This natural rebound typically occurs after a peak experience, and if we fail to understand the rebound cycle, we are likely to question the reality of the peak experience. "How could I feel so down after such a great high?"

Al: To me, this rebound thing was the first sign of my insanity. I could be so sure I had it under control, and then for seemingly no reason, I would get an uncontrollable obsession to drink, or in the case of the jealousy thing, I just "had to know".

Question: State your rebounding experience when you tried to withdraw from your addiction.

DAY 5 - Today is _____

STEP ONE - (HONESTY) WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER ALCOHOL - THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE.

Day Five Action

1. Workbook assignment for Step One begins on page 13. Underline what was most useful for you and caused you to have questions. Write them down.

2. Workbook assignment is working on Step One Questions. Write out your response to these questions on a separate sheet.

3. Today's reading assignment from the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (Chapter One, pages 21-24). Average reading time is 7 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.

4. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you are currently working on in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.

Today's Mission Statement: Reading Step One in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions will give us a better overview of Step One, as you respond to the Step One questions. These questions will contrast back and forth from what we could gain by having this area changed, healed, or transformed, and what it will cost us if we do not change. When you finish these questions, you will likely realize the fact that if you could have changed by yourself, you would not be doing this 40-day Commitment.

Al: My sponsor had pointed out to me that I must admit my powerlessness over my limited personal "reality" and that my life had become unmanageable if I were going to be able to realize this way of life. My personal "reality" had failed me repeatedly. My "reality" is characterized by limiting, useless, and even harmful habits of thought and feeling. These often give me the illusion that my Higher Power is not always present, nor do I want Him to be at times. I could not experience the fullness of love, and I feared that I did not have any real individual purpose or meaning. I am now willing to commit to this program to the best of my ability and leave the results to the Boss.

This program is designed to remove obstructions and create an environment where natural healing, wholeness, and awakening can take place. The principles that healing causes are the doing and living of these suggestions. **Action is the magic word.**

This healing begins the same way in any area of our life, in which we choose to apply it. It starts with the realization that we are powerless to change, alone and unaided. The mindset that made us sick will not, cannot make us well. We must want a change in our lives, not just need it, or we will not go to any length to get it. Many of us have been around the program for some time, and at the first sign of a problem, we want to jump into an inventory. We suggest that whenever we realize we are falling short of the lifestyle we want, we start at Step One and take the first nine Steps in order. A dentist had a sign in his office, "Only floss those teeth you want to keep". We are saying: only practice this program in the areas of your life that you want to be joyous, happy, and free.

Al: I need to work on this Program for my primary disease, alcoholism, and three other areas, my jealousy, for one, which I keep drinking and doing insane stuff. My dad told me long ago that I couldn't get along with others, which is so true. So, I need to apply this Program to my relationships. Then there is my violence. After I talked to Lou-is Pazeniton, my sponsor, I decided to follow his suggestion, that is, first things first, which means I had better focus on sobriety first. If I don't stop drinking, none of the rest will matter. He assured me that when he first worked on the Program, he got some healing in those other areas. He reminded me that this Program is based on Spiritual Principles, and we can apply it to any human condition, which he later did and still does. I can always go back and work on the Program, focusing on these other areas. He told me the more often we work on this Program, the more skillful we get.

It's suggested that you keep your response to the questions or statements on one crucial area at a time, for example, your drinking problem. **Write that critical area at the top of each page to remind yourself of that area.**

Questions for Step One:

1. List what you want changed. Choose one.
2. What pain or fear do you associate with changing this area?
3. What pleasure are you getting out of not changing?
4. What will it cost you if this does not change?
5. What are the benefits you could gain by having this changed?
6. How has this problem placed your essential relationships in jeopardy? (Example)
7. Have you lost self-respect and/or reputation due to this problem?
8. Has this problem made your home life unhappy?
9. Has this problem caused any illness? (Example)
10. Do you turn to the type of person who enables you to practice this problem, or to lower companions who enable you?
11. What part of this problem do your loved ones, friends, family, or business associates object to the most?
12. What abuse has happened to you and/or others due to this problem? (Example)
13. List examples of what you have done to try to fix, control, or change this area in your life.
14. What are the feelings, emotions, and conditions you have tried to alter or control with this problem?
15. Now ask yourself, "If this is such an important area in my life, why haven't I changed?"
16. Am I now willing to do whatever it takes to have this changed, healed, or transformed?
17. If your answer to number 16 is YES, write out the First Step: I admit I am powerless over (whatever you are working on), that my life in this area is unmanageable. I cannot, with my unaided will and present understanding, consistently manage this problem area.

DAY 6 - Today is _____

STEP TWO (HOPE) CAME TO BELIEVE THAT A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES COULD RESTORE US TO SANITY.

Day Six Action

1. Workbook assignment is working on Step Two. Write out your response to the two questions, **a** and **b**.
2. Today's reading assignment from the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (Chapter Step Two, pages 25 - 33). Average reading time is 17 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
3. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working on in the Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.

Today's Mission Statement: We're reminded that Step One shows us our problem - we are powerless over our little personal "reality". That is, we are unable to change our habits of thoughts and feelings alone and unaided. When we fall back into one of our ruts, habits, we cannot consistently manage our thoughts, feelings, or actions. Step Two tells us what the solution is. We need to find, to awaken to a Power Greater than ourselves. So how do we do this? How do we get from Step One, the problem, to Step Two, the Solution? Well, that's what our other ten Steps, the fellowship, and the rest of our program can do for us, if we are willing.

The way these Steps are set up in our Workbook helps the following Steps be more useful, more effective. For example, in Step One, we realize that we cannot be alone and unaided to change this area in our lives. Now, in Step Two, we're told that we will come to believe that a Power Greater than we COULD restore us. In Step Two, we're asked to write down the ways we have already received God's grace. So, by the time we reach Step Three, we are already aware of this Higher Power helping a person, as I am. (like me?) This makes it easier to cross the bridge to surrender everything, even if it is only for one hour at a time.

The workbook assignment is working on Step Two. Write out your response to these two questions, a and b.

a) Would it be possible for you to recall the times when you experienced that a Power Greater than yourself did for you what you could not do for yourself? Write out as many of these experiences as you can and be precise. If you cannot recall an experience related to the area you're presently working on, any experience with your invisible means of support will do.

Al: My sponsor suggested that I carry a notepad with me while I am working in this Program. I am so glad I have done this, because I found that as I went through my day, I would have essential memories come to mind or into my experience, and by bedtime, I could not remember them. I found it helpful to write just one or two keywords, and later I could reconstruct the idea or event. I am surprised by how much I have to be grateful for.

b) List as many ways as you can of anything that you are grateful for, including the smallest acts of kindness or the greatest. We want to start building a new habit of gratitude in our everyday lives. We suggest keeping this running list of "I am grateful for:" for at least 40 days.

I AM GRATEFUL FOR:

DAY 7 - Today is _____

Day Seven Action

1. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous (The Chapter Three More About Alcoholism, pages 30 – 43). Average reading time is 27 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
2. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples:

Today's Mission Statement: If we are working this 40-day Commitment on something other than alcoholism, we could "change" the chapter title to "More About [your area of concern]". We are addressing the human condition, so a rose by any other name is still a rose.

Al: The story about the jaywalker is the message that got to me. As it states on page 37, Alcoholics Anonymous, "Our behavior is as absurd and incomprehensible concerning the first drink as that of an individual with a passion, say, for jaywalking. ...He enjoys himself for a few years despite friendly warnings." I, too, had some friendly and not-friendly warnings. "...Luck then deserts him, and he is slightly injured several times in succession." If I had any luck left at all, it wasn't good. Last year, I drank, I got into the harmful stuff, and yet it did not stop my drinking for more than a day or two. "...He shuts himself up in an asylum, hoping to mend his ways. But the day he comes out, he races in front of a fire engine, which breaks his back. Such a man would be crazy, wouldn't he?" I withdrew from everyone, hoping I would change, but I would drop back into an old, sick rut. Yes, I now understand I must be restored to sanity, that is, if I ever was sane. I need to do whatever it takes to live this Program, this way of life, if I'm going to stop being a jaywalker, spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially.

SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES EXPAND WITH USE - "A.A.'s Twelve Steps are a group of principles, spiritual in their nature, if practiced as a way of life can expel..." (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions). Something spiritual will expand with its use. Material stuff and ego deteriorate with use.

JUST ONE TIME - The more active we are in the program, the sooner our denial breaks down. No matter how honest we were with our first set of Steps, we could only see a little; more will become apparent. Each time we work the Steps, the better we get at it, so return to the Well as needed.

PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES - "To practice these principles in all our affairs," as our Step Twelve implies, we will deal with many different areas in our lives. Something with many parts makes that something complex, but it does not make it complicated. This Step work will help us identify many of our parts, not as apart from the whole, but included in our whole being. To oversimplify is to be under the illusion, as many of us are, that all we need to do is stop drinking (or stop something) and all would be well.

CHANGING - Many of us could only see our little reflection in that limited mirror of our personal "reality," hearing only the hum of our little voice as that "reality." If we're tired of seeing our little reflection and hearing the hum of our little voice, then where do we go from here? Our little, personal "reality" must change, but how? That is what this workbook is all about.

DAY 8 - Today is _____

Day Eight Actions

1. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous (The Chapter 4 We Agnostics, pages 44 - 57) Average reading time is 27 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.

2. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working on in the Forty Day Commitment? Give examples:

Today's Mission Statement: Many of us had difficulty with the idea that the solution to our problem is to find a Power Greater than ourselves. With most compulsive, addictive folks, we could be an atheist, agnostic, and a true believer at the same time on a given day. This reading won't solve the problem, but every little bit will help.

Al: On page 45 of Alcoholics Anonymous is the most wonderful message I can ever remember. **I realized just how incompetent I was when I first got out of the hospital, drying out. Not only did I feel like a failure in every area of my life, but I had proof of it.**

"Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a Power greater than ourselves. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this Power?"

Well, that's precisely what this book is about. Its main objective is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself, which will solve your problem."

Even though I couldn't believe it was for me at first, I wanted and needed it so much. I have had a few miracles happen since I came into the Program, so I know it is true. We can find a Higher Power by which we can live.

EARNING OR GRACE - Some of us have an old belief that if we work at this program, we will earn a place in a "secret order," not so. We **cannot** earn the Three Spiritual Gifts; these were given to us when created, by grace. However, we do have a part, and that is to be as open and receptive as we can be for this grace. This would include uncovering, owning, and having a willingness to let go of everything that is not part of these Three Spiritual Gifts. Our personal "reality" runs on automatic, twenty-four hours a day, so we need to be committed to this process - otherwise, we will continue to be a victim of our habits of thoughts and feelings.

WHAT ARE THESE PRINCIPLES? The idea that the principles are embodied in the simple words that somehow got assigned to each Step over the years is another case of oversimplifying. I believe that they do have a lot of meaning; in fact, they are included in this workbook at the heading of each Step. As we begin to work, Each Step, we begin to understand the principles that are embodied in the process. That is, each one of the Steps is part of the whole and is not intended to be stand-alone. Alone, none of the Steps would be as effective.

REALITY - We do not change or adjust Reality. But we can be part of the solution, which removes obstructions and unwanted conditions from our little, limited personal "reality." What we can do is co-create an environment where the natural healing can take place, where our individual "reality" becomes a little more Real.

DAY 9 - Today is _____

STEP THREE (Faith) MADE A DECISION TO TURN OUR WILL AND LIVES OVER TO THE CARE OF GOD, AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM.

Day Nine Action

1. Workbook assignment - underline those things that were most useful for you. Write your response to questions 1 through 4.
2. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is from the Fourth Edition, pages 58-63 — average reading time: 12 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
3. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you are currently working on in the Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.
4. Today's reading assignment from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is Step Three, pages 34-41— average reading time: 14 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
5. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working on in the Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.

Today's Mission Statement: If we may remember from Step Two's exercise some of the ways our Higher Power has done for us what we could not do for ourselves, then Step Three is going to be a cakewalk.

Al: I have heard HOW IT WORKS so often in Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, I am surprised that I make a point to listen to it as if it were the first time. When we get to the ABCs, I love repeating them silently and, in some meetings, openly. "(a) That we were alcoholics and could not manage our lives. (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism. (c) That God could and would if He were sought."

What we believe is "good" is more likely to limit us than the "bad". With the "bad," we are more likely to toughen up to it, get used to it, or get away from it. With the "good," we are likely to settle for too little. While you are directly working on these Steps, we ask that you be willing to turn everything over to Your Higher Power, everything you even think or feel, you know or don't know- everything. The purpose of this is to open our minds and hope for a new understanding. We can see only our little reflection in that limited mirror of our personal "reality," hearing only the hum of our little voice as that limited "reality." In other words, we will work out of our past instead of the present in the Presence.

Our decision may run to extremes, from total commitment to a meaningless gesture. Even if we're committed to change, but our personal "reality" remains the same, then nothing has changed. This means that we are likely to fall back into one of our old habits. If we say, "I'm going to do this come hell or high water," and fail to live up to our promise, which is likely because our old habits are still running on automatic, we will feel even worse about ourselves.

This is one of the main characteristics of addictions (p. 10): the loss of willpower. Each time our willpower fails, with our best intentions, we feel even more hopeless, useless, powerless, and worthless. The most significant damage to our self-esteem comes from repeated failures at trying to change addictive, habitual behavior alone and unaided. It doesn't hurt much until we try our best to stop and change, but we can't. This trying alone and unaided with the same old personal "reality" is one of the leading causes of our hitting our bottom. It will get us ready for this Program and indeed a Higher Power.

"There is only one key, and it is called willingness. Once unlocked by willingness, the door opens almost by itself. Looking through it, we shall see a pathway with an inscription. It reads: This is the way to a faith that works." (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, Step Three reprinted with permission)

There were ten black birds on a wire. One decided to fly. How many were left? Ten. One decided, but no one flew. That was a meaningless gesture.

Al: When I first looked at Step Three, I knew it was going to be a problem. When I made an important decision, it was as if I were giving my word, and giving my word to a Higher Power was, to say the least, frightening. What was going to happen to me if I could not keep it? And, as I soon found out, I could not keep my word or my promise to my Higher Power or myself, and I was raised to believe a man had to keep his word or he was worthless. I had not worked on the rest of the Steps, so I had not identified my defects, much less had they been cleared away. Yes, I failed.

I had a realization when I was taking Step Two that I have had a merciful, invisible means of support for a long time; otherwise, I would have been dead or in jail. In Step Two, I had written specific events where someone or something Higher than me was doing for me what I could not do for myself. So, when I decided to turn everything over to a Higher Power, it was that Higher Power who had already helped me. That was helpful; however, my giving my word and not being able to keep it caused me big problems. I knew I had to work the rest of the Steps beginning with Step Four.

ACTION: Workbook assignment – As you work through this workbook, underline or highlight that which is most useful for you, so when you are reviewing it, you will save yourself some time and energy. Write your response to questions 1 through 4.

- 1. State what it means to you when you make an important decision. Give an example.**
- 2. State what this “will” and “life” you’re asked to turn over.**
- 3. State what “to the care of God” means to you.**
- 4. State what “as you understood Him” means to you.**

DAY 10 - Today is _____

STEP FOUR: (Courage) MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES

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Day Ten Action

1. Workbook assignment is to read Introduction to Step Four, underline those things that were most useful for you, and or caused you to have questions. Write them down.
2. Today's reading assignment from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is Step Four, pages 42-54 — average reading time: 25 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you. As you read this chapter, we find it helpful to answer the questions it offers and convert the statements into questions. That will give you a deeper insight into the area you are working in.
3. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working on in the Forty Day Commitment? Give examples.

INTRODUCTION TO STEP FOUR

Today's Mission Statement: Today, we begin by far the most demanding part of this 40-day Commitment. There will be a limited amount of reading, but what there is, is essential. Keep in mind we are looking for patterns, habits of thoughts and feelings, in other words, our personal "reality". Changing a habit changes the rest of our lives. While an individual event and experience, which seems separate or a one-time experience, may be interesting, the patterns or habits they represent are far more valuable. Keep a separate page to list these habits of thoughts and feelings as you work through this process.

AN OVERVIEW - Each action you're asked to take is part of a process to help you realize consciously, your personal "reality" through which most of your life experiences filter. This part of the process, Step Four, is crucial. Suppose we do not awaken to our little personal "reality" and take responsibility for our beliefs, habits of thought, and feelings. In that case, we will most likely continue to experience our lives automatically changing.

INDIVIDUALS AND "REALITY" - It is crucial to identify the individuals with whom we shared our lives, both in loving and harmful ways. "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." (pg.62, Alcoholics Anonymous – reprinted with permission). Of course, we have a lot to do to heal our past. However, it is even more vital to have our habits of thoughts and feelings, our rules and patterns, in other words, our personal "reality" healed, changed, or transformed. When done, it is not only for the past but also, more importantly, for the present and the future.

PLAN OF ACTION - **Action** is the magic word. But you may say, "You are asking too much, and it's not magic." If you do your best, the promise of freedom and wisdom will come. Just follow the format.

PERSONAL "REALITY" - The way we use the word "pattern" has many other names—habits of thoughts and feelings – Inner Rules – our personal "reality" - our personal filters. Whatever you choose to call these patterns, it's essential to know that these patterns determine most of your life experiences. These patterns are always present; however, we are not always aware of them.

WHAT ABOUT RULES AND PATTERNS WORKSHEET - The purpose of this simple exercise (Rules and Patterns Worksheet) is to help you identify more of your patterns or the inner rules you live by, conscious or not. Once you do, you have the right to choose whether to continue using these habits or build new ones. Often, our conscious mind says yes to something we want, but something does or does not happen, which keeps us from that wanted person, place, or thing. We likely have some long-forgotten rule or pattern we've created or followed that is telling us no. These rules and patterns will continue to run automatically until we call them into question. When you say, "I want this or to stop that," and you do not get this or stop that, it means that you have a contrary belief, rule, and pattern that's winning. The next time your conscious mind tells you one thing, and you are experiencing another, try saying this: "I must have a contrary rule and pattern telling me no, so let me see it." When it comes to our consciousness, you may choose to make a new decision about that rule and pattern and then turn it over to your Higher Power and affirm what you do want.

WE'VE GOT QUESTIONS - This workbook is filled with questions. The purpose of these questions is to get our personal "reality" to surface. This individual "reality" is made up of our habits of thoughts and feelings. There cannot be any long-term changes in conditions and causes without addressing their root causes. In doing an inventory, we want as complete and valid a list, report, record, evaluation, or survey of our abilities, assets, and resources that make up our personal "reality" as we can come up with. If we want something other than another quick "fix", we must go to the root of the problem - our consciousness as a habit.

This is the home of our personal "reality." Since it is so vital that we understand these basic principles, we will repeat them. Since our true healing will come by grace, we want to position ourselves in the best place to receive it.

A NEW WAY OF LIFE - We are working to build a new way of living by which we may live life to its fullest. To do this, we must let go of our old, useless, harmful, and limiting beliefs that are getting in the way of our realizing a Higher Power, a Higher Power that can and will do for us that we cannot do for ourselves. Finding the right questions and responding to them as honestly as we can, with as much courage as we can master now, will help us awaken to a Power Greater than ourselves. The problem is this: if our personal "reality" isn't changed, then nothing has changed. We fall back into the same old "rut."

WHAT'S A DEFECT? - Our defects, our shortcomings, are no more nor less than our habits of thoughts and feelings, our beliefs, our rules and patterns. In other words, they are our personal "reality" which no longer works, or which is harmful or too limiting.

A DRY HORSE THIEF - Why go to so much trouble? Some people have been around the program for years and have never done much of an inventory, if any. They have never taken the time to get to the conditions and causes. They may be "dry" but their habits of thoughts and feelings, their personal "reality," has not changed. It is unlikely that these people will be happy, joyous, and free. If nothing has changed, then nothing has changed. There is an old saying, "If you sober up a drunken horse thief, you've got a sober horse thief."

FACT-FINDING FACT-FACING PROCESS - "Though our decision [Step Three] was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us. Our liquor was but a symptom. ***So we had to get down to causes and conditions...*** A business which takes no regular inventory usually goes broke. Taking a commercial inventory is a fact-finding and fact-facing process. It is an effort to discover the truth about stock-in-trade. One object is to disclose damaged or unsalable goods, to get rid of them promptly and without regret. If the owner of the business is to be successful, he cannot fool himself about values." Nor can we.

DAY 11 - Today is _____

STEP FOUR (COURAGE) MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES. (CONTINUED)

Day Eleven Action:

1. Workbook assignment: Do a dry run on each of the suggested actions. This time will be spent and will enrich your experience with the 40-Day Commitment. Underline those things that were most useful for you and or caused you to have questions. Write them down.
2. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is pages 63-71—average reading time 15 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
3. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.
4. These "Assets" (page 23), "My Part" and "Affects My" (page 24) are used like a Drop Box on a computer. **Take these out of your Workbook and have them when asked to fill in the columns that refer to these.** With these lists, you will not have to turn back and forth through this Workbook to find the supporting List Boxes for other assignments.
5. This Step Eight Worksheet (page 25) will enable you to note those whom you have harmed as you work through your inventory, therefore having much of your Step Eight list done without going back over your work. **Take this worksheet out of your Workbook and have it when you come across one who needs to be on your Step Eight List.**

Today's Mission Statement: As some of us have found, reading, even studying the directions in advance, can save time and frustration. This format is designed specifically to carry out the mandate: "With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the start." (pg.58 Alcoholics Anonymous). It is designed to help us uncover and discover our personal "reality", patterns, and habits of thoughts and feelings that keep showing up, limiting, and/or harming us.

A BEFORE THOUGHT - We believe that it's essential that we work the Steps in order; each Step opens the door to the next. It is common when we start having problems in a different area to go directly to Step Four. If you have not completed the first three Steps, we suggest that you do so before you begin your Step Four. Please read all the suggested information before you start your inventory. It will save you time later.

COMMITMENT - We strongly suggest you work on your Steps for at least one hour each day until you have completed this Workbook.

STAY FOCUSED - Try to keep your responses focused on the area or relationship you are working on. If possible, keep your responses short, simple, and to the point.

FORMAT - Step Four Inventory Format – Our goal is to be “. . . fearless and thorough from the very start.” You may use it as a stand-alone or in concert with one or more of the other inventories. More inventories are on our website 12stepworkbook.org. Just follow the Basic Step Four Inventory Format. This format can serve as a general inventory, covering your life in its entirety rather than focusing on a specific area, at your discretion.

Take this Asset List out of your Workbook and have it when you are asked to fill in the columns that refer to these. With these lists, you will not have to turn back and forth through this Workbook to find the supporting List Boxes for other assignments.

Check out those on the list below that are most important to you

Use those you checked below to complete your Asset Worksheet (page 27)

Asset: A useful or valuable quality, person, or thing, something that contributes to one's well-being.

ASSETS (THREE SPIRITUAL GIFTS)					
	1	The awakening to the Presence of our Higher Power.			
	2	The awakening to the Love that we are, that all of us are.			
	3	Awaken to the individual Self we were created to be, with purpose & meaning.			
	4	Abundance		34	Independent
	5	Acceptance		35	Inner-directed
	6	Ambition		36	Intelligence/Wise
	7	Beautiful/Handsome		37	Interested/Concerned
	8	Career/Work		38	Intuitive
	9	Committed/Dedicated		39	Joyful/Happy
	10	Communication		40	Kindness
	11	Compassion		41	Listener
	12	Conviction		42	Love/Caring/Sharing
	13	Curiosity		43	Loyalty
	14	Courage		44	Marriage
	15	Continuing education		45	Openness
	16	Creative/Inventive		46	Play/Leisure time
	17	Drive		47	Patient
	18	Even tempered		48	Perseverance
	19	Faith/Devotion/Spiritual		49	Power/Title/Money
	20	Family		50	Preparedness
	21	Focus		51	Productive
	22	Forgiving		52	Resilience
	23	Friends		53	Risk taking
	24	Generous		54	School/Learning
	25	God-consciousness		55	Sex
	26	Good companion		56	Supportive
	27	Good income		57	Take charge
	28	Good parent		58	Teachable
	29	Good worker		59	Toughness
	30	Health		60	Trust
	31	Higher Purpose		61	Understanding
	32	Honesty		62	Unselfish
	33	Humor		63	Willingness

ASSET	HOW WAS IT EXPRESSED AND OR VIOLATED
(Example) Teachable	I have realized since I came into the Program, I have been teachable. At first, I was willing to do anything to get away from the heat. Now I'm hungry for a better way of life. I know now I must be teachable.

MY PART LIST - The following is a list of everyday My Part actions and reactions – Use this list as you would a Drop Box on a computer. **Take these out of your Workbook** and **have them** when you're asked to fill in the columns that refer to these by writing the corresponding numbers - assign a number to those you add.

Check those on the list below that are most important to you

Use those you checked below to complete you're My Part Worksheet (page 35)

#	MY PART	#	MY PART	#	MY PART
1	Anger	9	Lust	17	Saving face
2	Broken word	10	Negativity	18	Self-pity
3	Delusion	11	Perfectionism	19	Self-seeking
4	Fear	12	Playing God	20	Selfishness
5	Gluttony	13	Poor decision	21	Sloth
6	Greed	14	Pride	22	Stubborn
7	Guilt	15	Procrastinate	23	Withdraw
8	Insecurity	16	Revenge	24	Withhold
Create your own list					

AFFECTS MY LIST BOXES - The following is a list of ordinary Affects actions and reactions– Use this list as you would a Drop Box on a computer. Have it when you're asked to fill in the columns that refer to these by writing the corresponding numbers - assign a number to those you add.

Check out those on the list below that are most important to you

Use those you checked below to complete your Affects My Worksheet (page 36)

#	SOCIAL INSTINCTS	#	SECURITY INSTINCTS	#	SEX INSTINCTS
1	Able to relate	12	Ambitions	23	Abnormal/ Unacceptable
2	Acceptance	13	Emotional	24	Abuse
3	Ambitions	14	Financial	25	Acceptable/ Normal
4	Belonging	15	Home	26	God given
5	Fame	16	Job	27	Hidden
6	Forgiveness	17	Material	28	Jealousy
7	Love	18	Power	29	Loving Union
8	Productive	19	Safety	30	Masturbation
9	Relationships	20	Spiritual	31	Needy
10	Respected	21	Trust	32	Relief/ Safe
11	Self-esteem	22	Worth	33	Withholding

This ***Step Eight Worksheet*** will enable you to note those whom you have harmed as you work through your inventory, thereby having much of your Step Eight list done without going back over your work. **Take this worksheet out of your Workbook and have it** when you come across one who needs to be on your Step Eight List.

Whenever we harm someone or ourselves, there has been a violation of one or more of the Three Spiritual Gifts: (1) Presence of our Higher Power, (2) Love, (3) The Individually Created Self. In the first column, which notes were violated? In column 2, note the one you harmed, and in column 3, what you did or did not do to cause the harm.

SG	HARMED	WHAT YOU DID OR DID NOT DO TO CAUSE THE HARM

1. Note in the SG column which of these Three Spiritual Gifts that were violated
2. In the next column, place the name of those you are unable or unwilling to forgive at this time.

SG	NAME	SG	NAME	SG	NAME

DAY 12 - Today is _____

Al: I had told my sponsor, Lou-is Pazeniton (Lou is passing it on), that I would do anything if he would help me, and then he brought me this Workbook. I had no idea it would take so much work, or maybe I would have been more conservative with my promises.

Lou-is told me that it would be impossible to overemphasize the importance of identifying our assets. He said the violation of those I value was the root cause of my resentment and fears. Realizing that the first three assets on the Asset List Boxes determine much of our happiness, joy, and freedom, their violation causes much of my lack and limitation. He said, most of my resentments would come about when #2 (love) and or #3 (some violation of my Self), and when I was not trusting my Higher Power (1) as my only trustworthy source.

ACTION:

Now, use the Asset List you took out of your Workbook (page 23). This asset list will act as a response guide, as well as a reference for the Resentment List Box as needed. **If you haven't checked the most important listed assets to you, do so now. Turn to the Asset Worksheet below and fill in your response for those assets you chose.**

ACTION: The Assets Worksheet

- a. In the left-hand column, write the ASSET.
- b. In the right column, write HOW IT WAS EXPRESSED OR VIOLATED.

ASSET	HOW IT WAS EXPRESSED OR VIOLATED
<i>(Example)</i> Teachable	I have come to realize that since joining the Program, I have been teachable. At first, I was willing to do anything to get away from the heat; now I'm hungry for a better way of life. I know now I must be teachable.

ASSET WORKSHEET

[illegible]

DAY 13 - Today is _____

RESENTMENTS

Al: I asked my sponsor, Lou-is, “What are resentments? Isn’t resentment just another word for anger?”

Lou-is: Resentment comes from a root word, which means to re-feel. If we could deal with anger quickly, that anger would not turn into resentment. Re-feeling a violation of an asset qualifies as a resentment. A breach of assets directly or indirectly causes all resentments. The one common characteristic of all resentments is that they involve some violation of assets. Violations of Assets #2 (love) and/or #3 (some violations of my Self), and certainly not trusting #1 my Higher Power, **are most often the root cause of our resentments.**

Resentments, we’re told in the Big Book, are our number one offender; my experience confirms that. Resentments rob me of the joy of living. Revealing most of my defects, selfishness, self-centeredness, and fear. Resentments drive alcoholics back to the bottle; if not to the bottle, it could cut us off from the sunlight of the Spirit. Don’t cut this part of your inventory short.

Check those listed below that show up often in your resentments – these are but thought starters.

It is suggested that you make your own list too.

#	RESENTMENTS	#	RESENTMENTS
1	Abandonment	21	Infidelity
2	Addiction	22	Insensitivity
3	Alcoholism	23	Insults
4	Backbiters	24	Jealousy
5	Being used	25	Judgmental
6	Condemnation	26	Pride
7	Condescending	27	Perfectionism
8	Controlling	28	Projecting my guilt
9	Depredation	29	Manipulation
10	Dishonesty	30	Negativity
11	Disloyalty	31	Rejection
12	Disrespectful	32	Self-centeredness
13	Driven	33	Selfishness
14	Envy	34	Self-righteousness
15	Fear	35	Slights
16	H-A-L-T	36	Toxic thinking
17	Isolation	37	Too much thinking - no action
18	Illusions	38	User
19	Inconsiderate	39	What others are
20	Indifference		
<i>Create your list</i>		<i>Create your list</i>	

Having completed the Resentment List Boxes, we’re to address our resentments. Have the Asset List (page 24), the My Part, and the Affects My List (page 24) pullout list ready.

ACTION: Write out your most prevalent resentments using the following suggested format.

- In column one, write the name of a person, place, or thing you resent.
- In column two, write the cause of the resentment, that is, what was or was not done, taken away, or not given.
- In column three, write your violated Assets (matching number on the My Asset List - p. 23)
- In column four, write My Part (matching number on the List My Part List - p. 24)
- In column five, write Affected My (matching number on the Affects My List – p. 24)

RESENTMENT WORKSHEET

[illegible]

DAY 14 - Today is _____

FORGIVENESS

The willingness to forgive is the key to all healing in all types of relationships.

The key to an open mind is the willingness to forgive. The key to self-forgiveness is the willingness to forgive others. The key to our spiritual growth and awakening is the willingness to forgive. We may not be able to forgive for one “reason” or another. We can be willing even if our only motive is selfish, like “I just don’t want to feel this way, or I’m tired of being negative and resentful.”

At times, we dismiss the importance of forgiveness with little or no thought. One possible reason may be as simple as not knowing how to forgive. Often, we are just unable to forgive or let go. Often, it is the core belief that when someone does something “wrong,” we automatically judge them guilty and punish, even if that someone is ourselves. We’re reminded that guilt and punishment are our universal drug of choice. The illusion that something has changed when it’s only a fix. Yet, when we are wrong, we likely want forgiveness quickly. Not only that, but we also don’t want our “crime” made into a capital crime. The only way I can believe in unconditional forgiveness is if I must first willingly extend it to others.

A naive person both forgives and forgets; a stupid person does not forgive or forget; a wise person forgives but does not forget. The wise person can use this experience of love to share. Remember this: What I can do is my responsibility; all else is God’s responsibility. So, all I can do at any given time is to be willing; that’s enough. Let our Higher Power do the rest.

USING THE LIST BOXES – Choose the items from the suggested list that address your present understanding. If not included in the recommended list below, add yours to the list. A Forgiveness Worksheet follows the List Boxes.

#	WHY I AM WILLING	#	WHY I AM UNWILLING OR UNABLE
1	I have a lot more to gain.	14	Being alone is better than being hurt.
2	I want the problem corrected.	15	Fear, taken advantage of.
3	I want this relationship.	16	I don’t know how to forgive.
4	I want to be forgiven.	17	I can’t let go / I seek revenge.
5	I want to be free.	18	I want them punished/they don’t deserve it.
6	I want to build trust.	19	I stuffed it.
7	I want to experience peace.	20	They didn’t forgive me.
8	Willing to let God do for me.	21	They will do “it” again.
9	I’ll forgive/I won’t forget.	22	I’m no fool/ They did hurt me.
10	I’m tired of being fearful.	23	I’m scared because some people like to hurt others.
11	I’m tired of being negative.	24	Withholding/Withdrawing.
12	I’m tired of being resentful.	25	Shows that I approve of ().
13	It is the loving thing to do.	26	They will go unpunished.
Create your list		Create your list	

ACTION – After you have completed the Forgiveness List Boxes, follow the same procedure to complete the second part of this Forgiveness assignment.

- In column one, write the name of a person, place, or thing you have a problem forgiving.
- In column two, write the cause - what was or was not done, taken away, or not given.

FORGIVENESS WORKSHEET

[illegible]

We may read a thousand menus and cookbooks and starve to death, but if we have just one bite, our nourishment begins. If we have only one moment of experienced forgiveness, our healing has started.

Lou-is: Here is a way we can experience true forgiveness in the present moment. The present moment is the only Real Time we have. Yes, we can experience **instant forgiveness**, even here and now, one moment at a time. If you do not get anything else out of this workshop but this simple process of **Instant Forgiveness**, if you are anything like me, then count this workshop a great success.

1. Pick out one of your worst resentments, one you have held on to far too long.
2. Just be sure you are **willing** to let it go – **not able but willing**.
3. Find a motive, no matter how selfish it may be, one that your head and your heart can agree on. For example, *Al was so tired of being negative, fearful, and angry with Sam M. that he no longer cared who did what, to whom. He just wanted to be free, so he no longer felt, thought, or acted as he did when he thought or heard Sam's name.* Al's sponsor, Lou-is Pazeniton, had told him, *"God answers the prayers of the heart because He put them there."*
4. When you realize you want a few minutes of freedom, say: ***God, I am so tired of thinking and feeling this way. I am willing at this moment to forgive myself and (name of the person, place, or thing) for any wrongs, real or illusory, that I did or did not do.***
5. ***God, I am willing but not able now to forgive – so I entrust this to you.***
6. ***Thank you.***
7. *Now let it go – one moment at a time – this one.* Repeat this any time a thought of this one comes back. Bless both of you and turn it back to your Higher Power.
8. We have the power to choose in this moment – this present one. It is the only one.
9. Leave the results to your Higher Power. He will do for us what we cannot do alone and unaided.

Al: I want to forgive everyone, even myself, NOW. Lou-is: How about one at a time? Suppose I want the fullness of life, loving, caring relationships, joy, happiness, and freedom, an open heart, mind, and soul. In that case, I must willingly forgive all, even myself, perhaps not able, but willingly. Then I can look to our Father to do the deed.

Lou-is: By our Higher Powers' grace and forgiveness through this way of life, the doors of our consciousness are cleared of clutter. Caused by holding on to old, useless, or harmful beliefs and judgments of others and ourselves, we realize our part in all of this is our little personal "reality." A primary key in this house cleaning is the willingness to forgive all, even ourselves. Our Program demonstrates that we can, through its process, become **forgiven forgivers forgiving**.

Al: Is there a time when forgiveness isn't needed, even when a "wrong" is done?

Lou-is: Yes. "We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it." (Alcoholics Anonymous – pg.83) In those areas where we have experienced some degree of awakening, healing, and transformation, we do not need guilt, punishment, resentment, or fear. This area, once healed, becomes an asset that we share with others. We have let go of our harmful judgments of others and ourselves to some degree. Without these judgments, we do not need forgiveness. This is the best kind of forgiveness, none required.

Lou-is: Here are brief excerpts from: To Give Is to Receive by Gerald G. Jampolsky.

"The emphasis underlying this course is that inner peace can be reached only when we practice forgiveness. Forgiveness is the letting go of the past and is therefore the means for correcting our perceptions. Our perceptions can only be undone now. This is possible only through the process of letting go of whatever we think other people did to us, or whatever we may think we did to them. Through true forgiveness, we can stop the endless recycling of guilt and look on others and ourselves with love. Forgiveness allows us to let go of all thoughts that separate us from one another. Without the belief in separation, we can accept our healing and extend healing love to all those around us. Healing, then, becomes the thought of unity. Whenever I see someone else as guilty, I am reinforcing my sense of guilt and unworthiness. I cannot forgive myself unless I am willing to forgive others. Only through forgiveness can my release from guilt and fear be complete."

Brief excerpts from: *The Sermon on the Mount* by Emmet Fox.

“The technique of forgiveness is simple. The only essential is the willingness to forgive. Provided you want to forgive the offender, the greater part of the work is already done. People have always made such a bogey of forgiveness because they have been under the erroneous impression that to forgive a person means that you must compel yourself to like him. Happily, this is by no means the case – we’re not called on to like anyone whom we do not find ourselves liking spontaneously, and, indeed, it is impossible to like people to order. You can no more like order than you can hold the winds in your fist, and if you endeavor to coerce yourself into doing so, you will finish by disliking or hating the offender more than ever. We’re not obliged to like anyone, but we are under a binding obligation to love everyone, love meaning a vivid sense of impersonal goodwill. This has nothing directly to do with feelings; though always followed, sooner or later, by an incredible feeling of peace and happiness.”

The method of forgiveness is this:

1. Find a quiet place and be alone.
2. Repeat any prayer or treatment that appeals to you.
3. Then quietly say: “I fully and freely forgive X (mentioning the name of the offender); I lose him and let him go. I completely forgive the whole business in question. It’s finished forever. I cast the burden of resentment on the [Higher Power] within me. He is free now, and I am free too. I wish him well in every phase of his life. That incident is finished. The Truth has set us both free. I thank God.”
4. Then get up and go about your business.
5. Afterward, whenever the memory of the offender or the offense happens to come into your mind, bless the delinquent briefly and dismiss the thought. Do this, however many times the idea may come back.
6. After a few days, it will return less often, until you forget it altogether. Then, perhaps after an interval, shorter or longer, the old trouble may come back to memory once more, but you will find that now all bitterness and resentment have disappeared, and you are both free with perfect freedom. Your forgiveness is complete. You will experience incredible joy in the realization of the demonstration.

DAY 15 - Today is _____

MY PART AND AFFECTS MY

Al: My sponsor, Lou-is made this My Part simple when he said, “It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with us.” (Twelve and Twelve Alcoholics Anonymous reprinted with permission) My Part comes directly from my personal “reality,” (rules, patterns, habits of thoughts and feelings, belief systems). This is the reason we made a big deal out of our inventories. Our change comes by changing our consciousness. Part of our personal “reality”, we made up or went along with others’ beliefs. Once we accept that our experience is filtered through our personal “reality” we can then choose to have it changed. Then our Higher Power, through this Program, can and will, if asked, transform our defects into assets.

ACTION:

Now, use the My Part and Affects My Lists you took out of your Workbook (page 24). This list will act as a response guide, as well as a reference for the Resentment List Boxes as needed. **If you haven't checked the most important ones listed as My Part and Affects My, please do so now.** Please turn to the My Part and Affects My Worksheet below and fill in your response.

ACTION – After you have completed the My Part List Boxes, complete the next part of this assignment.

- a. In column one, write what your part was.
- b. In column two, write what you did or did not do as your part.

MY PART WORKSHEET

Repeating My Part	Describing My Part of A Repeating Pattern

ACTION – After you have completed the Affects My List Boxes, complete the next part of this assignment.

- c. In column one, write which of your instincts was affected.
d. In column two, write how this instinct came into play.

AFFECTS MY WORKSHEET

[illegible]

DAY 16 - Today is _____

Lou-is: Fear gains much of its “power” by our trying to avoid looking at it, feeling it, or running away from it. When we turn and face our fears, their nature will change into one of two things:

1. This fear is a current problem that calls for a solution or acceptance. (**Rational**)
2. This fear is an illusion that we made up. (**Irrational**)

The way we are likely to respond is easy to see. When I have a rational fear or problem, I can choose to look for a solution or accept it; the emotional insanity is being taken out of it.

When I realize that this fear is irrational, another one of my illusions I made up, that it is not Reality but my personal “reality”, it is likely I can let it go or disempower it. Then I am ready; I can start working on my personal “reality,” which I have created as an illusion.

We live here and now; let us respond in the present. We need not dig up old fears unless they are an active pattern. Unless you still experience a fear you had problems with in the past or projected into the future, it is irrational. Just because we experienced that fear, it is not rational now.

ACTION: Check those fears you experience too often or too intensely. This is a list of common fears found among us. Add to this list as many fears as you care to and assign each one a number.

MY FEAR LIST BOXES

#	COMMON FEARS	#	COMMON FEARS
1	11 TH hour of my life	17	I won't get what I want.
2	Abandonment	18	I'll be paid back
3	Accidents	19	Incapable of loving/being loved
4	Any form of lack	20	Loss of a loved one
5	Authorities – God	21	Loss of a relationship
6	Being alone	22	Never enough
7	Being taken advantage of	23	No loving God-conscious
8	Can't have children	24	No one to share with
9	Can't meet financial needs	25	Not liked or loved
10	Certain types of people	26	Poor health
11	Change	27	Projecting my anger
12	Disapproval	28	Rejection
13	Failure	29	Success
14	Fear of being a fool	30	Stuck, can't change
15	Fearful of having children	31	Unable to realize purpose
16	Have no real value	32	Weird imagination
<i>Create your list</i>		<i>Create your list</i>	

ACTION – After you have completed the My Fear List Boxes, use the following format.

1. In column one, write the name of the person, place, or thing you fear.
2. In column two, write the cause: what was or was not done, taken away, or not given.
3. Is this Fear Rational (R) or Irrational (I)? Mark one of the right-hand columns.

FEAR WORKSHEET

FEAR OF:	THE CAUSE OF THIS FEAR	R	I

DAY 17 - Today is _____

MY HARM

Al: What about the people who harmed me?

Lou-is: Is there anyone who harmed you that you did not include on your resentment list and your forgiveness list? If so, go back and include them on those two lists.

Al: When you first started working with the Program with me, you let me get by with stuff, and now you call me on everything. I just wanted you to know that I suffered harm also.

Lou-is: Welcome to planet Earth. **Let's focus on your inventory and no one else's.** We are all in one life, which means we cannot harm another without harming ourselves. As a result of doing a thorough job on my inventory and owning what I uncovered and discovered, I have been able to choose to stop harming others and myself as best I can. Sometimes that is good and sometimes not, but I can tell you my life has improved. I'm able to extend love instead of all the negative stuff that was a habit. I'm given that opportunity to choose once again not to let the past equal my future.

HOW I HARMED OTHERS' LIST BOXES

ACTION: Check the common harm that you do or have done to others. This list is suggestive only of those common harms among us. Add to this list as many harms as you care to and assign each one a number.

#	WHAT I DID OR DID NOT DO	#	WHAT I DID OR DID NOT DO
1	Withholding	15	Lied
2	Withdrawing	16	Manipulated
3	Betrayed my loved one	17	Put another down
4	Blamed	18	Shut down
5	Changed addictions	19	Snooped
6	Criticized	20	Talked one way, acted another
7	Distrusted	21	Took what was not mine
8	Empty promises	22	Was a no-show
9	Enabled someone	23	Was controlling
10	Gossiped	24	Was dishonest
11	Got "even"	25	Was jealous
12	I'm a user	26	Would not forgive
13	Irresponsible	27	Was in denial
14	Lack of communication		
<i>Create your list</i>		<i>Create your list</i>	

HOW I HARMED MYSELF LIST BOXES

ACTION: Check the common harm that you do or have done to yourself. This list is suggestive only of those common harms among us. Add to this list as much harm as you care to and assign each one a number.

#	WHAT I DID OR DID NOT DO	#	WHAT I DID OR DID NOT DO
1	I bankrupted myself financially.	11	I hurt myself spiritually.
2	I compromised myself.	12	I lied to myself.
3	I could not trust myself.	13	I made myself ill.
4	I cut myself off from love.	14	I punished myself.
5	I denied God's Presence.	15	I withheld/withdrew.
6	I denied my purpose.	16	I would not ask for help.
7	I hurt myself emotionally.	17	I would not forgive myself.
8	I hurt myself mentally.	18	I lost respect for others.
9	I hurt myself physically.	19	I lost respect for myself.
10	I hurt myself socially.	20	<i>I was in denial</i>
<i>Create your list</i>		<i>Create your list</i>	

ACTION:

Now, use the **My Part and Affects My Lists** you took out of your **Workbook** (page 24). This list will act as a response guide, as well as a reference for the Harm List Boxes as needed. If you haven't checked the most important ones listed as My Part and Affects My, please do so now.

ACTION: Step ***Eight Worksheet*** (page 25) enabled you to note those whom you harmed as you worked through your inventory, thereby having much of your Step Eight list done without going back over your work.

ACTION:

1. In column one, write the name of the person, place, or thing you harmed.
2. In column two, write the cause: what was or was not done, taken away, or not given.
3. In column three, write My Part and column four Affects My (see these List Boxes p 24)

HOW I HARMED OTHERS WORKSHEET

I Harmed:	What I Did or Did Not Do to Cause the Harm	My Part	Affects My

HOW I HARMED MYSELF

I Harmed:	What I Did or Did Not Do to Cause the Harm	My Part	Affects My

DAY 18 - Today is _____

RULES AND PATTERNS

Lou-is: Al, this is a chance for you to see that some of your old habits of thoughts and feelings began a long time ago. Perhaps some of these beliefs you picked up as you grew up have not changed all that much. I have had some of mine for so long that I've forgotten when and where I started responding the way I do.

Al: Maybe I can blame my mom and dad for all my stuff! Just joking.

GROWING UP ACTION: Using the form RULES and PATTERNS WORKSHEET - In column one, write the rule you grew up with for each of your critical areas. If this rule is useless, harmful, or too limiting, and you no longer want it controlling your life experiences, mark an (X).

CURRENT ACTION Using the form RULES and PATTERNS WORKSHEET – In column two, write the rule you currently have for each of your vital areas. If this rule is useless, harmful, or too limiting, and you no longer want it to mark an (X).

DESIRED RULE ACTION: Using this form, the RULES and PATTERNS WORKSHEET will give you a flow of how most habits come about. If you think it's time to change one of these rules, write your desired replacement rule in column three. For added space, use the Supplement List on the next page or a separate sheet of paper.

RULES and PATTERNS WORKSHEET

	(1) My Growing up rule: My Career		(2) My Current rule for: My Career	(3) My Desired rule for: My Career
X	<i>We must earn what we get. Money doesn't grow on trees.</i>	X	<i>Work smarter, not harder.</i>	<i>Do the best you can and leave the rest to God.</i>

My growing-up rule for:	My Current rule for:	My Desired rule for:

My growing-up rule for:	My Current rule for:	My Desired rule for:

My growing-up rule for:	My Current rule for:	My Desired rule for:

My growing-up rule for:	My Current rule for:	My Desired rule for:

My growing-up rule for:	My Current rule for:	My Desired rule for:

My growing-up rule for:	My Current rule for:	My Desired rule for:

My growing-up rule for:	My Current rule for:	My Desired rule for:

DAY 19 - Today is _____

RULES/PATTERNS LIST BOXES

USING THESE LIST BOXES – In principle, you are to follow the same procedure for each of the List Boxes.

ACTION: a.) Choose the items from the List Boxes you have complied with or violated. **b.)** Note your choices. Follow the examples below.

After you identify your patterns, go back over them and give a “make fun of” name. This name will help you disentangle and disempower your old habits of thought and feeling, casting out the old rules and patterns, and building new ones. The “make fun of” names are part of Step Six and Step Ten.

Al: I’m not good at making up funny names for my worst defects.

Lou-is: What are some of the funniest characters to you on TV or in the movies? Name some of these and use that creative mind of yours to come up with a few that make a chuckle come to mind.

Lou-is: The sooner we can laugh at ourselves, the sooner our healing. These “Make fun of” names symbolize an unwanted guest who comes to our door; we can choose to invite that person in or not. We may mull over a “who done me wrong” song, or we can turn that person away as soon as we see who it is. A “Make fun of” name will disempower that person. They are less likely to harm us, upset us, or cause the fear we experience when faced with intimidation. When we lose respect for that person to the point we can laugh when we think of them, we have come a long way to being free from their control over us. In one way or another, we gave them that “power.” It’s time to take it back and give it to our real **Boss**.

Let me give you an example:

“Make fun of” name		#	Violated and complied with are just two sides to the same rule or pattern.
Jeal - o-saurus	X	29	I have problems with jealousy. <i>(I had this problem so long it seems like it started with the dinosaurs – but when I think of it as a jealous dinosaur I can lighten up.)</i>
Peppy le Few	X	8	<i>I practice the “law” of lack, never enough of anything (love, money, time). (Same as above)</i>
Peter Perfector With a P on my chest	X	19	I judge by such high standards that all must fail. I am driven by perfectionism. <i>(No matter what I do, it is never good enough. I started feeling this way, as if I were back on my first day in school. A family motivator, beatings will continue until grades improve.</i>

Lou-is: You’ve got the main point. Now I’m finished with the task. It would be helpful for you to come up with some of your essential patterns on the next page. Have fun.

The first three, the Three Spiritual Gifts, are primary patterns, and they are not subject to any real change. We came equipped with these three Spiritual Gifts, even though we’re not fully awakened.

You will find that the cause of every resentment is one or both of the second and third Spiritual Gifts violated or unfulfilled. The second Spiritual Gift, **awakening to the Love that we are**, and the third Spiritual Gift, **awakening to the created individual we are, with purpose and meaning**.

The following rules and patterns are common for most of us. These are suggestions only. If you cannot find a pattern in the following that serves your needs, make up your own list.

“Make fun of” name		#	Violated and complied with are just two sides to the same rule and pattern.
		1	Awakening to the Presence of our Higher Power.
		2	Awakening to the Love that we are.
		3	Awakening to the created individual we are, with purpose and meaning.
		4	I know I am of more worth or value than I can prove.
		5	I look to other people, places, and things to determine my worth, meaning, purpose, happiness, sadness, fulfillment, etc.
		6	I compromise myself to get what I need or want, only to resent it afterward.
		7	I have been in denial.
		8	I practice the “law” of lack, never enough (love, money, time, etc.).
		9	I am quick to forgive. I seek corrections. I realize that guilt and punishment are an illusion, like a drug, a quick fix.
		10	Control everyone with guilt and punishment, even myself.
		11	I project my experience and beliefs and call it reality.
		12	I know I am far more loving than I can give or receive.
		13	The beginning of a relationship (love, friends, business): I believe you believe in me, that I am special. The beginning of the end of this relationship is when I no longer think you believe in me.
		14	I resist change. I am likely to procrastinate.
		15	I blame the past, project negatively on the future, and fear the present.
		16	I experience fear in most areas of my life, including success and love.
		17	I must earn everything, know the “right” people, or get lucky.
		18	I have hurt others, but I did it without malice.
		19	I judge by such high standards that all must fail. I am driven by perfectionism.
		20	I change roles within the same pattern, thinking I have changed: one time a victim, the next time the aggressor; or I am a user, and the next time I am used.
		21	I make “deals” and promises, but I don’t keep them.
		22	What I can have I don’t want, and what I want I can’t have.
		23	I struggle to form a genuine connection with another human being.
		24	I feel I don’t belong. I feel emptiness that no one or anything can fill.
		25	I keep attracting the same sick relationships (love, business, friends).
		26	I just cannot find the willingness to do whatever “it” takes.
		27	I am doing just great, but I fall into an old rut. This is a rebound.
		28	I am too pessimistic, fearful, and angry, so I withhold and withdraw.
		29	I have lots of problems with jealousy.
		30	
		31	
		32	
		33	
		34	
		35	
		36	
		37	

DAY 20 - Today is _____

STEP FIVE - (INTEGRITY)

ADMITTED TO GOD, TO OURSELVES, AND TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR WRONGS.

1. Workbook assignment – Underline those that were most useful for you and caused you to have questions. Write them down.
2. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is pages 72 through 75, reading time 5 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
3. Today's reading assignment from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is Step Five - Average reading time 15 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
4. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you are working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.

Al Kohallek had promised himself that he would never tell anyone his secrets; so, when he got to the Fifth Step, he balked. He thought he could find an easier, softer way. But he could not.

Al: I've already talked to my Higher Power about my "secrets," and I see no reason to tell anyone else. I realized that if I tell someone everything, that person could blackmail me into doing their will. Shall I move on to Step Six?

Lou-is: Admitting to our Higher Power and ourselves everything is two-thirds of this Step. And it's the easier part. But it will not get the job done. We are most likely to vacillate between two extremes: guilt and remorse, and rationalizing our part away. Here are some of the reasons for taking this vital Step:

1. Most of us have always dreamed of having someone to love and accept us just the way we are. Only by sharing with another human being can we hope to experience this love and acceptance to the max.
2. The Big Book states, **"If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking. And there is very little chance of our being restored to sanity."**
3. Some of us gain that feeling of belonging.
4. We are likely to experience a God-consciousness or a spiritual awakening.
5. Our "secrets" take too much energy to support. Letting go of them will release the energy we are using to hold them back.
6. I've never heard of anyone being blackmailed after doing their Fifth Step, but I have heard of people experiencing the Presence of a Higher Power, freedom, and peace of mind for the first time.

DAY 21 - Today is _____

STEP FIVE - (INTEGRITY) Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

PREP WORK FOR SHARING YOUR STEP FIVE

1. Outline as you go through this Prep Work so you will be able to remember everything you need to share.
2. Review all your responses to the questions and statements up to this point. This includes your written responses, your List Boxes, and the Step Eight Worksheet.
3. Be ever so mindful of your patterns (experiences that you repeat), even if they were with different people, places, things, or forms. These patterns (habits of thoughts and feelings) are one of, if not the most essential parts of this process. These patterns make up your personal “reality” and are the key to long-term recovery and personal growth.
4. These patterns will play a part in Steps Six and Ten.
5. As we go through our review, we continue our preliminary work on Step Eight. As we are preparing, we may discover more harm done and people we cannot forgive. Add these to your Step Eight Worksheet.

Al: Who's going to listen to my Fifth Step?

Lou-is: You must find the right person to confide in. We believe it would be best if you could share with someone who has completed their own Fifth Step. If this person is living in the Program/they will have a better understanding of what it is you are trying to do. However, you may not be able to find someone you could trust in your present group. You may have to go outside our Program. Many of us take our first Fifth Step with a non-Program person. It is important that you feel you can trust this person. This should enable you to be as honest as you can be at the time. We would caution you about taking this Step with someone too close to you or one with whom you have an ax to grind. We may hurt that person or another if you are honest. It would be wise to question your motives.

Ask this person to help you **identify your patterns**. Show this person a copy of your pattern list. They may have additions to your list or ask you to clarify the pattern. You may find you have a lot in common; on the other hand, you may not even come close. Remember, it is your inventory and patterns that ultimately determine whether you gain or fail to gain from them.

Lou-is suggested that Al make a list of the possible people that he could or would take this vital step with. Al listed those people whom he thought would most benefit him by taking his Fifth Step with them. In the first column, he put their names. In the second column, he wrote what he believed to be any benefits or advantages of doing it with that person. In the third column, he wrote what he thought or felt could be any possible problems, and he listed his fears.

NAME	BENEFITS - ADVANTAGES	PROBLEMS - FEARS

Lou is also suggested that Al set the date, in fact, tomorrow, Day 22, a starting time, and the estimated amount of time to set aside to complete it with the person he has chosen. Reminding him to ensure each has the time needed.

DATE	START TIME	UP TO TIME	PLACE	PERSON	PHONE #

Ask this person what format we'll use for taking the Fifth Step. Write out any questions you may have or any part of the process you may want that person to clarify before you begin.

DAY 22 - Today is _____

STEP FIVE - (INTEGRITY)

ADMITTED TO GOD, TO OURSELVES, AND TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR WRONGS.

ACTION: TAKING YOUR STEP FIVE

Now that your prep work is done, you set the date, the starting time, and the estimated amount of time to set aside to complete it with the person you have chosen. This is a great day to carry out this vital mission.

DATE	START TIME	UP TO TIME	PLACE	PERSON	PHONE #

Al trusted Lou-is, so he decided to take his Fifth Step with him. Also, Lou-is already knew a lot about him. Al did what his sponsor suggested. He pocketed his pride and went to it, “illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past.” Once he had taken this Step, withholding nothing, he was delighted. He had his first spiritual experience. He felt for the first time that another human accepted him just as he was. He felt a new freedom.

Some of what Al had kept hidden for many years lost their power over him. For the moment, Al felt like a free man, but Lou-is reminded him there was work yet to do. A few days after Al had taken his Fifth Step, he was working with a newcomer and found himself sharing one of his secrets to help the newcomer. He told us later how wonderful it was to help another share his experience of a secret he was sure he would take to the grave.

DAY 23 - Today is _____

STEP SIX - (WILLINGNESS) WERE ENTIRELY READY TO HAVE GOD REMOVE ALL THESE DEFECTS OF CHARACTER.

ACTION: STEP SIX PREP WORK

1. Workbook assignment - Underline what's most useful for you and follow the suggested actions **A – B – C – D – E**.
2. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is page 76- first paragraph, reading time 1 minute. Highlight what is most important to you.
3. Today's reading assignment from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is Step Six - Average reading time 13 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
4. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working on in the Forty Day Commitment? Give examples.

The key to this Step is in the wording. "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character." First, we want something when we are entirely ready. This wanting something is often the beginning of healing. Second, it is God who is to remove all, not us alone and unaided. Third, the wording tells us which defects need to be removed. Now, "these" implies that we have identified specific defects.

Al: The rest of the Steps will be a piece of cake after taking my Fifth Step.

Lou-is: I want to remind you not to take any of the Steps too lightly. Each Step is an integral part of the process. In case you have forgotten, our minds will play tricks on us. For example, with this Step, our conscious mind tells us, "Of course, I want all of these defects removed." Knowing now just how harmful, useless, or painful these defects are, I will just let them have two problems with that well-intended statement. First, generalizing will not get it done. Second, we are not the ones to remove these defects, alone and unaided. Just follow the **A – B – C – D – E** - down below.

ACTION: (A) Lou-is: I am reminding you; just because something is simple does not make it easy. Now that you've identified some of your patterns, "these defects", following these suggestions can be particularly useful. Take each one of "these defects" and ask yourself if you are ready to have God remove it.

1. If your answer is yes, move on to the next defect (patterns).
2. If not, go back to Step One just for that defect and run over the First Step Questions to help increase the pain of holding on to that defect.
3. If that is not enough to convince you, try this: We know that our problems, as with everything in life, are progressive. Our problems will worsen if nothing changes. Our habits grow stronger with use (personal "reality", patterns). As time passes, we become "better" at our defects. Another way to increase the pain of holding on to this defect is by extending it into the future.
4. What will it be like if this does not change in another year, five, ten, or twenty years?
5. Have you had enough? Or are you thirsty for more?
6. If you are now ready, continue this process until you have gone over each one of your defects.

ACTION: (B) Lou-is: Going over each defect in such detail will help us:

- a. It will help us with owning each of our defects, our defects center in our minds.
- b. We're reminded just how powerless we are to remove these defects alone and unaided.
- c. By doing something positive about these defects, we experience a new hope.
- d. It will help us see that some of our listed defects are just different parts of the same pattern. This will help us combine them, which is part of the following suggestion.

If you have followed this suggested process, you have gone over your uncovered defects, combining them into the smallest number of patterns. If you have not done that, please do so now.

Al: Yes, I have gone over them until I am even sick of them. I hope God is not too busy to remove them quickly.

Lou-is: You sound like one of us, “Do it quickly, at least by Friday so that I can have a great weekend”. I find that I still have all the defects I had when I came into the Program. Those defects I have experienced have become assets, tools, and early warning signals through God's grace. Those defects do not occur as often; they are short-lived and not intense. This is a sure sign of growth and awakening.

Lou-is: We are building a new way of life, and we feel it's so important to understand that it is a long-term process. It's not another quick fix. We didn't get here overnight; instead, we've developed limited, sick, and sometimes insane patterns and habits over many years. It's important to remember that if we do the best job we can with this Program, we will experience a way of life that is far beyond anything we dreamed.

Lou-is: The following suggestion: Assign each of these defects, patterns, a “Make Fun Of” name. These names become essential to us when setting up our last three Steps to live and grow by. These will be part of our Early Warning System. Speaking of “Make Fun Of” names, what about making fun of names such as: Al Kohallek (Alcoholic), Allienon (Al Anon), Lou-is Pazeniton (Lou is passing it on), and Eye (I) Witness? No comment.

ACTION: (C) We reviewed our inventory after finishing our Fifth Step and updated our Rules and Patterns List Boxes. Now we assign each of these defective Patterns a dishonoring, discrediting name, a "make fun of" name. You can change the "Make Fun Of" anytime. We will use these "Make Fun Of" names to disempower these defects (patterns) of the power we gave them. Making fun of our defects and laughing at ourselves is healing. We will go into the "HOW TO" in Step Ten. **ACTION:** (1) In column one, write the “Make Fun Of” name. (2) In column two, write the pattern.

(3) In column three, write the number of that pattern. See the Rules and Patterns List Boxes, p. 44.

“Make Fun Of” Name	RULE and PATTERN	#

ACTION: (D) Which of these defects are you now ready to have God remove? Fill in the matching #

#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#

ACTION: (E) Decide which of these defects you are unwilling or unable to let go of now. Fill in the matching # - Go back to suggestions (A 3 through 7), to upgrade these defects to the “ready” list.

#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#

DAY 24 - Today is _____

STEP SEVEN - (HUMILITY) HUMBLY ASKED HIM TO REMOVE OUR SHORTCOMINGS.

ACTION: – STEP SEVEN

1. Workbook assignment - Underline those things that were most useful for you, and follow the suggestions.
2. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is page 76, second paragraph - reading time 1 minute. Highlight what is most important to you.
3. Today's reading assignment from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is Step Seven - Average reading time 14 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
4. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you are currently working in the Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.

Al: I did not like the idea of having to write so much when I began this process or of committing to working on it every day. As I got into working on it as part of the healing process, I saw it differently. I realized at some point that I was no longer playing a game or looking for a quick fix. My life and its quality were in question. Perhaps dedicating an hour a day was, after all, a worthwhile investment in bringing about healing and awakening to my spiritual gifts.

Lou-is: I find it interesting that I would spend every waking moment for days on just one resentment or fear. I was a lot like you, Al; when it came time to work on the healing process in the beginning, I resisted the suggestion that I should spend at least an hour a day on the solution. Is that insane or what?

Al: What is the difference between defects and shortcomings?

Lou-is: A person asked Bill W. the same question, and he replied that there was no real difference. He didn't want to repeat the same word. However, sometimes our words have a hidden meaning that we are unaware of. When I got to my Fifth Step, I felt defective. Taking my Fifth Step with an understanding person and following it up with working on my Sixth Step, I knew that I was faulty, but I became ready to have God correct and remove these defects.

I was now aware of these defects. I just wanted to trust that a loving God could and would remove my defective beliefs, habits, and my little personal "reality," giving me a new hope! The love shown to me made me realize it wasn't my flaws but my shortcomings.

Al: As I reflected on my past wrongs, I thought I had harmed others and myself. It was not my intention to hurt anyone, but I did. When these harms were taking place, as I see now, I was reacting to my "then reality." Because I received so much love, forgiveness, and acceptance when I took my Fifth Step, I began to feel that it was more like a shortcoming, coming up short. The root word for sin means missing the mark, and that is the way I have come to believe a loving God views us. I am so grateful I had the experiences and the willingness to share them.

Lou-is: When I realized God, as I understood Him, as my only true Source, I was humbled at that moment, opened, and teachable. When we are aware that it is our Higher Power, and not ourselves, alone and unaided, who is to remove our shortcomings, our decision to follow through becomes easier. If you are now ready and willing to accept the healing of these shortcomings, the following suggestions prove helpful.

We suggest that you submit each of your shortcomings (patterns) to a form of the Serenity Prayer.

God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change,

Courage to change the things we can,

And wisdom to know the difference.

Some part of our shortcomings (defects, patterns, and personal “reality”) we may have to accept.

Example: We would be wise to accept that we cannot change others, or what was done or not done to us.

ACTION:(A) What is it about this pattern, shortcoming that I must accept?

Most of the time, there is at least some part of a pattern we can change, which may be mental, physical, emotional, social, or spiritual.

Example: We may not be able to stop one of our shortcomings that comes into our consciousness, but we can stop dwelling on it for one moment at a time.

ACTION: (B) What is it about this pattern, shortcoming that I can change?

Peace comes to us by grace. Most of us love the times when we experience even a few moments of it. When we are at peace, everything seems to be in harmony, and conflict is absent. Perhaps serenity is far more valuable in this human condition. Everything around us can be falling apart, but if we have the grace of serenity, we know at some deeper level that all is going to work out. We suggest that you ask for serenity, as it may relate to each pattern.

Example: If we are going to be open to change and healing, then we need the wisdom to know what we could change and what we need to accept. Sometimes we can be so sure we will be able to change, and we cannot. At times, we assure ourselves that we have accepted something, and we find that we have not even come close to acceptance. We suggest asking for courage and wisdom as they relate to each pattern.

ACTION: (C) Ask God for the Serenity, Courage, and Wisdom to know the difference.

Follow this format for each of your shortcomings (patterns). Use the facing pages or separate pages to complete this assignment.

ACTION: (A) What is it about this pattern, shortcoming that I must accept?

ACTION: (B) What is it about this pattern, shortcoming that I can change?

ACTION: (C) Ask God for the Serenity, Courage, and Wisdom to know the difference.

STEP EIGHT - (BROTHERLY LOVE, WILLINGNESS TO FORGIVE)
MADE A LIST OF ALL PERSONS WE HAD HARMED AND BECAME WILLING TO MAKE
AMENDS TO THEM ALL.

ACTION: STEP EIGHT

1. Workbook assignment - Underline those things that were most useful for you and follow the suggestions on Eight Step assignments – take separate sheets of paper to write out your three lists. Just follow the examples.
2. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is pages 76 – 84, reading time 15 minutes.
3. Today's reading assignment from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is Step Eight - Average reading time 11 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
4. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working on in the Forty Day Commitment? Give examples.

We suggest categorizing those you have harmed into three groups. First, list those you have harmed and to whom you are ready, willing, and able to make amends. The second list includes those you are eager to make amends to but are currently unable to do so. The third group consists of the people you have harmed, but you are unwilling to make amends. Also, we have included a format to help us with our forgiveness. Have you ever noticed that we harm those we have not forgiven?

Now we are ready for your Step Eight Worksheet (p. 25 - one of the take-out worksheets). It should include the names of those you harmed, along with the harm done.

ACTION: [1] This first group is for those you are ready, harmed, and harm done to make amends to now. On a separate sheet of paper, use the following format. We suggest reviewing your plan of action with your sponsor or someone who has completed some of their amends, after finishing each group, before embarking on your Step Nine adventures.

Example: Name of the one you harmed.	Sam M.
What you did or did not do caused the harm. I thought that Sam had been bad-mouthing me. I started telling a bunch of lies about him, and it turned out that my information was wrong. Sam had not said anything about me, good or bad.	
How will you go about making these amends? Write down your plan of action for each amends. I had hurt Sam with George, Mary, Sally, and John, so I went to each of them and apologized, explaining that I was wrong and should never have said anything about Sam. And if they ever hear me talk like that again about anyone, ask me to take my inventory. I am going to these people instead of Sam because that is where the "crime" took place. There is no need to hurt Sam when he didn't even know I had said anything bad. I am ready, willing, and able to make these amends. Now I need to talk to my sponsor, Lou-is. I may have missed something, so I want Lou-is to look this over. If he says it's OK the way I am intending, I will make an appointment with these four people and make my amends AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.	

ACTION: [2] This group consists of those you are willing to make amends to but are unable to for some reason now. After you finish writing this list, share your thoughts and feelings about these amends with the person who is helping you work on this Step. Ask yourself: are my reasons valid, or am I just fooling myself out of fear or some other form of resistance? For example, you may owe a great deal of money, and you don't have it. You can at least talk to these people and come up with a plan of action. In other words, do all you can to upgrade this group to group one.

Example: Name of the one you harmed.

Mary Brown

What you did or did not do caused the harm. I had an auto accident with Mary Brown – I got her name and address and told her I was going to take care of her car. I lied to her about my address and phone number so she could not get in contact with me, so I never paid her.

State why you cannot make this amends now. Seek out someone to help you. I went by her home address, and she had moved away, leaving no forwarding address. The landlord did not have any information that checked out. I am ready and willing, but unable to find her. What shall I do?

ACTION: [3] In this group are the ones you are resisting or saying "**no, never.**" Our Higher Power could help if asked. We shall never be free, holding on to the past. Pray for the willingness to take care of these amends. Put these people on a prayer "hit list." Pray for this person five times a day (awakening, midmorning, noon, midafternoon, and evening), for two weeks. Upgrade this one to group one or two.

Example: [3] Name of the one you harmed.

Pete Duelittle, my ex-partner

What you did or did not cause harm. I combined my funds with the company's money and failed to repay it upon dissolving the partnership. I do not intend to ever talk to him, much less give him any money. He jacked me around on another deal. I should have known better than partner-up with him.

State the form of resistance and why you are unwilling or unable to make this end. Pete has a lot more money than I do; he does not need my little commingled money. I hate him and the horse he came in on. I would give him \$100 not to even hear his name.

Follow this Format for each of those you harmed – Do not start to make amends until you talk to a Program person or an understanding person with experience, if possible.

ACTION: [1] This first group is for those who are ready, willing, and able to make amends now. On a separate sheet of paper, use the following format. We suggest reviewing your plan of action with your sponsor or someone who has made amends, after completing each group, before embarking on your Step Nine adventures.

Name of the one you harmed.

What you did or did not do to cause the harm.

How will you go about making this amends? Write down your plan of action for each amends.

ACTION: [2] This group consists of those you are willing to make amends to but are unable to for some reason now. After you finish writing this list, share your thoughts and feelings about these amends with the person who is helping you work on this Step. Ask yourself: are my reasons valid, or am I just fooling myself out of fear or some other form of resistance? For example, you may owe a great deal of money, and you don't have it. You can at least talk to these people and come up with a plan of action. In other words, do all you can to upgrade this group to group one.

Name of the one you harmed.

What you did or did not do to cause the harm

State why you cannot make this amends now. Seek out someone to help you.

ACTION: [3] In this group are the ones you are resisting or saying "**no, never.**" Our Higher Power could help if asked. We shall never be free, holding on to the past. Pray for the willingness to take care of these amends. Put these people on a prayer "hit list." Pray for this person five times a day (on awakening, midmorning, noon, midafternoon, and before you go to sleep), for two weeks or whatever time it takes for you to experience that you have let it go. Do everything possible to upgrade this group to group one or two.

Name of the one you harmed.

What you did or did not do to cause the harm in the first place.

State the form of the resistance and why you are unwilling or unable to make this amends.

DAY 26 - Today is _____

STEP NINE - (LOVE IN ACTION, JUSTICE - MAKING IT RIGHT)
MADE DIRECT AMENDS TO SUCH PEOPLE WHEREVER POSSIBLE, EXCEPT WHEN TO DO SO
WOULD INJURE THEM OR OTHERS.

ACTION: STEP NINE

1. Workbook assignment: Underline those things that were most useful and follow the suggestions.
2. Build your amends contact list by following the examples given today.
3. Today's reading assignment from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is Step Nine - Average reading time of 6 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
4. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you are currently working on in the Forty-Day Commitment?

This Step will go a long way in healing a relationship or ending it. The primary purpose is to let go of the past, to take walls down, to heal.

Al: I hear a lot about "Living Amends." How about some suggestions? I may be doing a lot of those.

Lou-is: **LIVING AMENDS:** The best amends we can make for those we love and ourselves are living amends, by practicing these principles in all our affairs. Walk our talk. In Step Eight, we wrote down some of the ways we were willing to make amends. At the time, we may have been too general. Now let's be a little more specific. Make a list of actions you are willing to take consistently as living amends.

A General rule: Make amends where the harm is done. Example: You have burned someone through gossip; make amends to the one you gossiped with, and not the one you gossiped about.

INTO ACTION (An amends format)

After reviewing your Eighth Step Plan, make an appointment list. Make your amends in person, face-to-face, if possible, unless it causes more harm. For example, if the person we need to make amends to is an ex-lover, we need to question our motives. In addition, if this person has someone else in his life, your contact could cause more harm. Once again, it is always wise to talk over your plan with your sponsor or another person who has some experience with making amends. At each stage of the process, it would be wise to ask your Higher Power for the ability you need to be honest, willing, and open-minded, loving, forgiving, wise, or anything else that comes to mind.

ACTION IS THE MAGIC WORD (An amends format)

1. Make an appointment, asking for a few minutes of their time to clear something up. Try not to go into details currently unless the person insists on doing so. This first contact is to make an appointment on a separate sheet of paper, set up your appointment information, including name, date, time, meeting place, and phone number.
2. When you go for the appointment, you may say something like this: "I'm now in a Twelve-Step Program, which suggests that I clear up my past by making amends, or I may not get well."
3. If this is/was a long-term relationship, state the amends in general first. This way, the other person can fill in the thing they felt was the harm done.
4. You may choose to say something like this, "I was wrong, and I deeply regret all the ways I have harmed you. I would do it differently now. I'm asking for your forgiveness, but you may be unable to forgive me. I can truly understand. I'm not sure I could if the shoe were on the other foot."
5. If they want to open an area or be more specific, do so. You are there to have the problem healed, to take walls down. So many times, what you thought was harm done and what they thought it was are not even close.

6. On the other hand, you may choose to state the thing you regret straight out.
7. If it's money to be repaid, make the best payback plan you can for now, one you can keep. Remember, you are only giving back what was originally theirs.
8. If it is a relationship problem, ask what you can do to make it right.
9. Remember to take your Higher Power with you. Be willing to forgive both them and yourself.
10. Most of the time, if others see that we are sincere about this process, they are happy for us. However, there may be times when it does not go well. You are there to clear up your side of the street, not theirs. So, get on with your life. Let your Higher Power do His Job, and you can go about doing your own.

Amends can be made to people who have passed away. In your quiet time or meditation, call this person into your presence. Talk to them the same as you would if they were face-to-face. Alternatively, you may choose to write them a letter, stating everything you need to say, and then burn the letter. The most important thing is that you both be free to get on with your new lives.

Building your amends contact list

For each of those, you will need to make amends. To do this, take a separate sheet of paper and include all the information you will need to carry out those amends. Most often, it is more effective to make your amends face-to-face, but in some cases, that will not be wise or possible.

Example:

Name: Sam Jones **Phone #** 210 555 3946 **I made my appointment on** Tuesday, 2/6/26
My Amends Appointment is for: Date: 02/09/26 **at Time:** 2 PM
Amends to be done: Face-to-face at: 16607 Blanco Road, Suite 401, San Antonio, Texas 78232

Amends will be made: On the telephone at #

Amends will be made by mail - address

Amends will be made by email – email address

Brief outline of what I want to cover:

1. I ask my Higher Power to cause me to have all the honesty, willingness, and humility to carry out these amends.
2. I'm now in a Twelve-Step Program, which suggests that I clear up my past by making amends or I may not get well.
3. I was wrong, and I deeply regret all the ways I have harmed you and the company. I would do it differently now. I'm asking for your forgiveness, but you may be unable to forgive me. I can truly understand. I'm not sure I could if the shoe were on the other foot.
4. I co-mingled my money with company money; the best I can tell is about \$600. I don't have much today, but I have \$50, and I agree to pay the rest out with interest at \$50 a month until I have repaid all. If I can pay it off quicker, I will, but right now I know I can do it at \$50 a month.
5. I know that money will not restore the trust you once had for me. I do regret betraying your confidence. I am here to show my intention to change. Thank you
6. If Sam does not accept my offer, I will make the best deal I can without overcommitting myself.
7. I am grateful for the willingness to clear my side of the street.

Having completed your prep work for Step Nine to the best of your ability at this time, including scheduling as many appointments as possible, you are now ready for DAY 27 - the day when you go about making your amends. Good luck, and may God bless you.

DAY 27 - Today is _____

STEP NINE - (LOVE IN ACTION, JUSTICE - MAKING IT RIGHT)
MADE DIRECT AMENDS TO SUCH PEOPLE WHEREVER POSSIBLE, EXCEPT WHEN TO DO SO
WOULD INJURE THEM OR OTHERS.

ACTION: STEP NINE

Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is the Promises at the bottom of page 83 and top of page 84.

Having done your prep work for taking Step Nine as best you could, now including making as many appointments as possible, you're ready for this DAY 27 - the day when you go about making your amends. When you start each of your amends, you will find it helpful to use your daily opening affirmation.

Is there anyone left in Group (3), list (page 54)? Those who resisted making amends or said, "no never" and could not upgrade to group (1) one or (2) two, check out forgiveness on page 31.

FORGIVENESS is the key to happiness and loving relationships with our Higher Power, others, and ourselves. At times, the harm was too much for us to forgive. Willingness to forgive is the key; however, we may be unable or unwilling to forgive (check out the Forgiveness List Boxes). For those, we suggest that you pray for the willingness to forgive and put them on a prayer "hit list." Pray for this person five times a day (on waking, mid-morning, noon, mid-afternoon, and before you go to sleep), for two weeks or whatever time it takes.

The most challenging thing is to forgive ourselves. There are several reasons for this; we have too much inside information, including how often we have fallen short. This program and life in general are a process, from limited to less limited ad infinitum. Some of us have an illusion that someday we will graduate. Each experience is a stepping-stone that we took for a stumbling block. That caused disappointment, which in turn called for guilt and punishment, the drug of our choice. The beatings will continue until we become perfect. Let us forgive quickly and seek correction, leaving the results to our Higher Power.

A common forgiveness problem is forgiving those with whom we had long-term relationships. The primary reason we change the "crime" over time. We forgot what upset us when the "crimes" happened; we judge it with today's understanding. The following format will help you let go of the past. God can and will do for us that we cannot do for ourselves if we trust Him.

On a separate sheet, write out the following:

1. Name of the one who harmed you.
2. What did they do or not do to harm you?
3. How did you react at the time of the harm?
4. How did you feel and or think at the time of the harm?
5. What about now? How do you feel and or think about the harm?
6. How do you react when you think of, hear about, or see the one who harmed you?
7. Go to the right-hand column of the Forgiveness List Boxes page 29. Which of those items stands out?
8. Are you now willing to forgive so you can be free?
9. Now ask your Higher Power to bring about this forgiveness at all levels, even for this one moment. You can always take it back if you don't care about freedom. It is important to seek healing for the way you thought and felt at the time of the "crime" as well as the present.
10. As a rule, it is helpful to follow up after the forgiveness with a visit or a call to make sure the wall is down, unless it causes the other person harm. When the thought of this person comes to mind, bless them and turn again to your Higher Power. Now upgrade your amends list.

DAY 28 - Today is _____

STEP TEN: CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY AND WHEN WE WERE WRONG PROMPTLY ADMITTED IT. (PERSEVERANCE)

TITLE	DAY	PAGE
Introduction To the Growth Steps	28	58
Setups - When I Am I Most Likely To (Negative)	29	60
Setups - When I Am I Most Likely To (Positive)	30	62
A Negative Spiritual Road Map	31	64
A Positive Spiritual Road Map	32	67
Daily Journal	33	70

ACTION: STEP TEN

1. Workbook assignment - Underline what was most useful for you, write it down, and follow the suggestions
2. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.

Lou-is: By working the Steps of this Program, we're promised a Spiritual Awakening, "Having had a Spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps" (the First Spiritual Gift). This was a transforming experience; I was never the same. Some had an incredible Spiritual Awakening, but soon went back to sleep. I asked those who went back to sleep what went wrong. From that, I came up with some interesting conclusions.

The sleepers lacked containers or equivalents, spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally, or socially, to support an expanding consciousness. Resuming the old day-to-day lifestyle, they fell back into an old rut, habit of thought and feeling, unchanged and unregenerated personal "reality", soon to doubt that a real Spiritual awakening had happened, telling themselves that it was an illusion.

Those who did not fall back into old ways stepped up their awakening experience. In other words, sharing the love we are, our second Spiritual Gift. Plus, learning to practice these principles in all their affairs, our third Spiritual Gift, building the Spiritual, mental, physical, emotional, and social equivalents of their expanding conscious capacities. Our Program is a Spiritual Awakening, serving as a comprehensive training ground for spiritual, mental, physical, emotional, and social growth.

GROWTH STEPS - Steps Ten, Eleven, and Twelve are Growth Steps, when used daily, as a way of life. This will help us focus on the present, in the Presence. Let's start the day by inviting our consciousness to focus on what we believe God's Will is and practice it throughout the day. These three Steps are vital to the awakening of our Three Spiritual Gifts, helping us walk our talk. Step Ten in our Big Book reminds us of this: "We have entered the world of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness. This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime. Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear. When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them. We discuss them with someone immediately and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others are our code." (Alcoholics Anonymous page 84, reprinted with permission)

HOW PROMPT CAN WE BE? We have repeatedly emphasized throughout this workbook the importance of identifying our habits of thought and feeling, our personal "reality." All of life's experiences, real or illusory, are filtered and colored by our personal "reality," our belief. If there are long-term changes, we must identify our beliefs before we can take responsibility for them. In other words, own them. When we do this, we have the right to make a new decision about what to do with them. We must possess something before we

can surrender it, even to our Higher Power; we cannot give away something we don't have. This process will help us find and own our part, our personal "reality." To answer the question, how prompt can we turn from the problem to the solution? The answer is, "Very prompt." We can learn how to stay a step or two ahead.

SPIRITUAL AXIOM - "It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with us." (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, Step Ten) So what is wrong with us? It is our little personal "reality," our rules and patterns.

AS WE GO ABOUT OUR DAY - Most of our life experience runs on automatic until something disturbs us, which is "good" or "bad". This is an important moment in our growth. We can choose at that moment which way we will feel, think, and act, or just react automatically. This sounds too simple, too easy. It is simple, yes – easy, no.

"MAKE FUN OF" NAME - In Steps Four and Six, you're asked to come up with a "make fun of" name for each of your essential rules and patterns. Here in the Tenth Step, these can become a part of your growth as you go about your day. As these old rules and patterns, our personal "reality", come into our conscious life, we are to treat them as an unwanted guest.

EARLY WARNING SIGNALS:

As soon as you're disturbed, ask yourself, "Does this feel familiar?" (Spend a little time learning these rules and patterns, and your "make fun of" names.)

If so, say to yourself, "Here's (your "make fun of" for this guy). It's not easy to have much respect or credibility for one we are making fun of. Then state the new rule and pattern you want to build into a habit.

WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO? (DAY 29 Negative Page 60) (DAY 30 Positive Page 62)

The first two lists for working on our Tenth Step can help build an Early Warning Signal System. These question-thought-starters help us produce our lists of "When Am I Most Likely To." Some experts say that as many as 98% of our conscious experiences are running on automatic habits. It often feels like we're controlled, or that we've lost control, because of our conscious experiences running automatically. It feels as though we don't have any choices. If we're tired of this, and we likely are, we would not have come this far; identifying these habits as part of the healing process is vital.

SPIRITUAL ROAD MAP (DAY 31 Negative Page 64) (DAY 32 Positive Page 67) Next in the Tenth Step process, we will learn how to build an Early Warning Signal System Road Map. If we try following this exercise a few times, we could become an expert mapmaker. It is better to practice this exercise as soon as we make a mistake. The idea is simple: we spend most of our lives on autopilot. Then, it follows that we take the same path as a rule. We want to map those pathways, the good ones and the bad ones. If we map out our experiences, we will soon see the danger coming a step or two ahead of time. This will allow us to stop or turn onto a new path. Practice, Practice, and Practice.

DAILY JOURNAL (DAY 33 Page 70) If we keep a Daily Journal for at least forty (40) days, in just a critical area of our lives, we will gain a much deeper understanding of that area and the way we relate to it. The human condition runs in cycles. Al: Well, that explains it. Some days my thinking is clear and sharp; at other times I feel stupid.

Lou-is: When we learn to identify our cycles, we make better decisions and plans. Keeping a Daily Journal can help us track various cycles and patterns.

PRIMARY PURPOSE

Building an Early Warning System is essential, and we cannot overstate it. It offers us a new freedom in our daily lives. Learning to use the "make fun of" name is a valuable tool and can be fun, if you want it to be.

DAY 29 - Today is _____

STEP TEN: CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY AND WHEN WE WERE WRONG, PROMPTLY ADMITTED IT. (PERSEVERANCE)

ACTION: STEP TEN

“WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO” LIST - TODAY WE WILL COVER THE NEGATIVE

1. Today’s reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is pages 84 - 85, reading time 3 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
2. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you’re currently working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.
3. Respond to the list of WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO negative questions pages.
4. After you have responded to these twenty negative questions, build your own lists of WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO on page 59.

The following is the first list of “WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO?” which are negative SETUPS. SETUPS are the ways that we are likely to think, feel, and react to our habits of thought and feelings, our personal “reality.” We will continue to repeat these unless we change. If nothing changes, then nothing changes. Identifying these SETUPS can help create what we call an Early Warning Signal System. In other words, we can learn to see it coming, promptly admit it, choose to make a new decision about it, and take whatever action or inaction is called for long before that old stuff gets out of hand. These Early Warning Signal Systems are like freeway signs that indicate when our turn-off is approaching, allowing us to change lanes in time. It is up to each of us to decide to change lanes and act. What we can do is our responsibility, and what we cannot do is our Higher Power’s job.

Lou-is: I was listening to a motivational speaker, sharing a great success story of an NFL football receiver who was setting all kinds of receiving records in the NFL. He said, “Just watch this receiver in Sunday’s game; you will notice he is not 10 or 15 yards ahead of his defender; he was only a step ahead. Yet he is breaking NFL football records. To be a winner, you do not have to be light-years ahead of your competition, only one step.”

I related that statement to my dealings with others. Far too often, I struggled to get along with others. My social skills were lacking. I had not learned the importance of restraint of tongue and pen, as our Program suggested. I recalled the many times I saw myself going down the same old rut and unable to stop. On days 31 and 32, A Spiritual Road Map will guide us toward a solution for that problem. However, the purpose of today’s and tomorrow’s “WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO?” lists is an important part of the process in building the Early Warning Signal System, and that System is a vital part in making the Spiritual Road Map.

As you can see, if we could stay a step ahead of old, useless, harmful problems, we would be way ahead in the game of life. Example: At first, resentment was anger, and before the anger, it was likely a fear. The fear originated from an old belief. I didn't want to do something, or maybe I had to deal with someone I didn't want to deal with. Perhaps I had to work on something I wasn't good at, which caused me fear. Instead of letting it run on automatic, I could turn that “problem” over to our Higher Power, and its automatic course toward resentment would end or reduce its power.

The following information can be very useful, so let's get with it.

Respond to the list of WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO negative questions as they relate to the area you are working on in this workbook.

1. When am I most likely to have a physical craving for problem stuff?
2. When am I most likely to be a victim or an aggressor?
3. When am I most likely to feel fearful, anxious, or terrified?
4. When am I most likely to be too rigid?
5. When am I most likely stressed out or stressed?
6. When am I most likely to feel shame or guilt?
7. When am I most likely to feel hurt, angry, or resentful?
8. When am I most likely to feel unsure or doubtful?
9. When am I most likely to feel abnormal or confused?
10. When am I most likely to control others?
11. When am I most likely to feel inadequate, stupid, or incompetent?
12. When am I most likely to punish or make others feel guilty?
13. When am I most likely to feel sad or depressed?
14. When am I most likely to fear abandonment or rejection?
15. When am I most likely to put things off?
16. When am I most likely to withdraw or withhold?
17. When am I most likely to have obsessive thoughts or feelings?
18. When am I most likely to conflict with others or myself?
19. When am I most likely to judge or criticize?
20. When am I most likely to be too sensitive or overreact to criticism?

After you have responded to these twenty negative questions, build your lists of WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO:

DAY 30 - Today is _____

STEP TEN: CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY AND WHEN WE WERE WRONG, PROMPTLY ADMITTED IT. (PERSEVERANCE)

ACTION: STEP TEN

“WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO” LIST.

TODAY WE WILL COVER THE CONSTRUCTIVE, POSITIVE LIST

1. Today’s reading assignment from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is Step Ten - Average reading time 14 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
2. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you’re currently working on in the Forty Day Commitment? Give examples.
3. Respond to the list of WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO constructive/positive questions pages.
4. After you have responded to these twenty-one constructive/positive questions, build your own lists of WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO page 61.

The following is made up of the second list of “WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO” SETUPS. This second list is constructive, helpful, and positive. SETUPS are the ways that we are most likely to think, feel, and/or react to our habits of thoughts and feelings, our personal “reality.” We will continue to repeat these, unless we change. Unlike the negative examples, we want the change to be an expansion of that which is positive and constructive; in other words, we want what does work to increase. If nothing changes, then nothing changes. Identifying these SETUPS can help us create what we call an Early Warning Signal System. In other words, we can learn to anticipate it, promptly recognize it, choose to make a new decision, and take whatever action or inaction is called for long before it ever takes place, thereby improving the opportunities for a positive increase. These Early Warning Signal Systems are like the signs on a freeway that indicate when our turn-off is approaching, allowing us to change lanes in time. It is up to each of us to decide to change lanes and act. What we can do is our responsibility, and what we cannot do is our Higher Power’s Job.

Al: Why is it so hard for so many of us to open up when it comes to the good in our lives? I don’t have a problem talking about the negative stuff, but when it comes to positive or loving experiences, I am so closed off. Lou-is do you remember when I first started my Asset List, I resisted every statement or question. I am feeling the same way now with this list.

Lou-is: I had the same problem. I focused on the negative for so long that I thought expressing the good would not be honest. I still harbored old fears and resentments that had not been fully healed. Well, I still have concerns and anger, but the Program has taught me not to linger on them. To use the skills and tools you are learning to apply in your life, do the best you can.

CONSTRUCTIVE, USEFUL, AND POSITIVE SETUPS - It is no less important to identify our constructive, useful, and positive SETUPS. We aim to increase the good and raise awareness of its likelihood. The following list is to act only as a thought starter.

Respond to the list of constructive and positive “WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO” as related to the area you are working on in this workbook.

1. When am I most likely to experience the presence of God or Higher Power?
2. When am I most likely to experience being loved or to be loved?
3. When am I most likely grateful?
4. When am I most likely to trust others and myself?
5. When am I most likely able to make decisions and follow through?
6. When am I most likely to feel close or intimate toward others?
7. When am I most likely to feel safe, secure, and stable?
8. When am I most likely to feel I have a purpose, meaning, or mission in this life?
9. When am I most likely to feel wise and intelligent?
10. When am I most likely flexible?
11. When am I most likely playful, happy, joyous, and free?
12. When am I most likely to feel constructive and positive?
13. When am I most likely to forgive others and myself quickly?
14. When am I most likely to be patient with myself and others?
15. When am I most likely to be honest with myself and others?
16. When am I most likely to feel worthwhile and valuable?
17. When am I most likely to ask for what I need and want?
18. When am I most likely to make commitments and keep them?
19. When am I most likely to be spontaneous?
20. When am I most likely to feel like I belong?
21. When am I most likely to feel selfless?

After you have responded to these twenty-one constructive and positive questions, build your own lists of “WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO be constructive and positive.

STEP TEN: CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY AND WHEN WE WERE WRONG
PROMPTLY ADMITTED IT. (PERSEVERANCE)

ACTION: STEP TEN CONTINUED
NEGATIVE SPIRITUAL ROAD MAPS

1. Workshop assignment – designing a Spiritual Road Map on the negative side. Just follow the suggestion and the example below.
2. Build your example of a negative Spiritual Road Map by following Al's example.

An Early Warning Signal System - We are learning how to identify promptly, admit, and accept our part in our problems, before we harm others or ourselves. There is a simple solution. If we have been painstaking about working these first nine Steps, we are now aware of some of our personal "reality," that is, our habits of thoughts, feelings, actions, and reactions. With a bit of help from our When Am I Most Likely To lists and the rest of the Steps, we're able to see, know, or feel when these old habits show up. These old pathways have become ruts that we fall into repeatedly. To avoid these ruts, we must be consciously aware of them and choose to build new and more loving and helpful ruts, habits, by God's Grace.

In Step Six, we asked that you give these old habits, defects, ruts a dishonoring, discrediting, "make fun of" name. When one of these defects or ruts reappears, we treat it as an unwelcome guest. We interrupt its old pathways. We may say something like this: "Here comes ("make fun of name"), which is too limiting or harmful or of no use or value to me now. Higher Power, I now ask that You take 'it' and let me do only Your Will. I now choose to turn from the problem to the solution, accepting the answer."

BUILDING A SPIRITUAL ROAD MAP - This process of building a Spiritual Road Map has to include our mental, physical, emotional, and social beings, the humans that we are. This also includes all the crossroads, stoplights, detours, washouts, and dangerous intersections, as well as warning signs. When we run into problems, we can change directions if we choose. Our Program is a mind-training and spiritual awakening process. The following will help you start your Spiritual Road Map.

The exercise below is most effective just after we have fallen into one of our old ruts. So, keep this handy for the next time it happens, or if you have a fresh enough experience, you may choose to practice now. Because we are dealing with habits, we will have a next time. Take one of your old defects that has caused you problems in the past, one that you want changed, healed, or transformed, and respond to the following. REMEMBER WE ARE GOING BACKWARDS.

Example for the negative map. In this example, Al will answer the eight questions with one of his experiences. After each response, Al is shown that there is a solution. If Al chooses, he can apply our Program and build an early warning signal system.

1. Can you state one of your problems, defects, and/or harm done to another, which got out of hand? (If it is one of your patterns, state that or its "make fun of" name.)

"Perfect O Saurus" (19) shows up again – Al: I judge by such high standards that all must fail. I'm driven by perfectionism. The problem was that I went off on Sam M. today for not doing the perfect job I know he can do. Sam has walked off the job; now I'm stuck.

Al has long recognized that he will continue to struggle with perfectionism unless something changes. This time, it is too late; Sam is gone. Al can make amends to him, and maybe, just maybe, Sam will forgive him and come back to work. Al has no illusions that it will be no more than a quick fix again unless he applies the Program to this defect.

2. Most of the time, we get early warning signals before it's too late. At what point had the problem gotten out of hand?

Al: I realized early this morning that my anger was building up toward all the Sams in the world. I knew then that I needed to call my sponsor before I talked to Sam.

Al had enough of a warning signal when the thought came to him to call his sponsor. Instead of taking that positive action, he let his resentment at all the Sams of his past take over. It is time for Al to practice his Program on this resentment because this perfectionism goes far beyond Sam.

3. At what juncture could you have stopped the harmful flow, before passing the line of no return?

Al: When I picked up the telephone at 6:30 AM this morning to call Sam, I was already passing the “line of no return. I had already made up my mind that he was going to be irresponsible.

Al's pattern of perfectionism and acting it out through anger is no longer in denial, which means he has the tools to work on the solution. Now the ball is in Al's court.

4. When did you get the thought and feelings, “don't say or do this?”

Al: When I started building a case against all the Sams in the world, I could not stop the negative flood of resentments. It was a lot deeper than my dealings with Sam.

Al's perfectionism had already judged, tried, and convicted Sam and every irresponsible act he had ever even heard about. The suggestion from the Big Book, “restraint of tongue and pen,” never came to him. There is a good chance it would have if he had called his sponsor or gone to a meeting.

5. When was the last time you did, said, thought, or felt this same pattern? The SAMENESS: time, place, person, or type?

Al: I was preparing for an important project. I knew I would have to rely on Sam and others like him. The same old thing would happen: the work wouldn't be done well, it would be late, and he would raise the price on me. So, I was resentful of Sam before I even asked him for a bid.

Al has already made up his mind that he was going to have a problem, and he did, so why does he keep doing the same thing? This defect of perfectionism has become part of Al's personal “reality”, habits of thoughts and feelings. The tools in our Program can heal or transform this defect into an asset. Now that Al's denial is breaking down, he can choose to apply our Program to this problem.

6. Any unrelated problems going on? Any changes, good or bad: physical, mental, social, emotional, spiritual?

Al: I told myself I would not overeat last night, and I did, and I'm feeling guilty. When I feel guilty or disappointed in myself, I tend to take it out on others, a tendency that stems from my perfectionism.

If **Al** does not get to the conditions and causes of his defects, he will mostly trade addictions.

7. Any anniversaries, birthdays, special events nearby?

Al: My A.A. birthday is coming up. About a month before my birthday, I am filled with gratitude, but before long, my perfectionism sets in, and I start judging myself for not doing better.

By learning this simple process, Al can build an early warning system to avoid falling into an old rut and, if he does, quickly get out of it. He can learn to seek a solution before any real damage is done.

8. Are you feeling any guilt or shame about any area or anything (not just this one problem area) at this time?

Al: I feel shame about my abuse of company time and money. I can see how irresponsible I have been. No wonder I think others like Sam are irresponsible. I am projecting my guilt on others.

Al's responses to the eight questions from the SPIRITUAL ROAD MAPS and the two "WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO" list, plus the other information he generated from working the first nine Steps to build an Early Warning System, gave him the "one step ahead", which makes his chances better for happiness, joy and freedom.

This one step ahead can be applied here by building an Early Warning System. By taking all the information you have come up with so far, you can surely stay a step or two ahead of your old patterns, in other words, your habits of thought and feelings. Because our personal "reality" is made up of habits, we can count on them repeating themselves as habits do.

Recognizing your worst road hazards and defects and mapping them promptly will help build an applicable Early Warning System that enriches your life. Copy the eight questions on a card or paper and carry them with you; when an opportunity comes, you may use this tool.

Now build your example of a negative Spiritual Road Map by following Al's example.

1. Can you state one of your problems, defects, and/or harm done to another, which got out of hand? (If it is one of your patterns, state that or its "make fun of" name.)
2. Most of the time, we get early warning signals before it's too late. At what point had the problem gotten out of hand?
3. At what juncture could you have stopped the harmful flow before passing the line of no return?
4. When did you get the thought or feeling, "don't say or do this?"
5. When was the last time you did, said, thought, or felt this same pattern? The SAMENESS: time, place, person, or type?
6. Any unrelated problems going on? Any changes, good or bad: physical, mental, social, emotional, spiritual?
7. Any anniversaries, birthdays, or special events nearby?
8. Are you feeling any guilt or shame about any area or anything (not just this one problem area) currently?

DAY 32 - Today is _____

STEP TEN: CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY AND WHEN WE WERE WRONG PROMPTLY ADMITTED IT. (PERSEVERANCE)

ACTION: POSITIVE SPIRITUAL ROAD MAPS

1. Workshop assignment – designing a Spiritual Road Map on the positive side. Just follow the suggestion below and the example.
2. Build a Positive Spiritual Road Map by following Al's example.

We grow by our willingness to face and correct errors, converting them into assets. The alcoholic's past thus becomes the principal asset of the family, and frequently it is almost the only one. Cling to the thought that, in God's hands, the dark past is the greatest possession you have - the key to life and happiness for others. With it, you can avert death and misery for them." (Page 124 Alcoholics Anonymous reprinted with permission).

Lou-is: It's helpful to design a Positive Spiritual Road Map that you refer to on Day 31, the Negative Spiritual Road Map. We tend to share our resentments, fears, harms, and negative aspects more quickly than our assets and positive qualities. Follow Al's example for the Positive Spiritual Road Map.

A SPIRITUAL ROAD MAP (The Constructive Road)

It is just as important to identify our constructive, helpful, positive, and loving paths as the negative ones. Throughout this workbook, we have focused on both the assets and the liabilities. As the old saying goes, "If it works, don't fix it." We may add it if it works and then increase it.

With a good Early Warning Signal System and Guidance System, we are learning how to identify promptly, admit, and accept our part in both the destructive and the constructive. By choosing constructive, helpful, or loving actions, we increase the chances of a fulfilling experience. If we have been painstaking about working these first nine Steps, we are now aware of some of our personal "reality," that is, our habits of thoughts, feelings, actions, and reactions. With a bit of help from our When Am I Most Likely To - Constructive, Useful, and Positive lists and the rest of the Steps, we can recognize when these habits are likely to occur. Just as with the old, negative, useless roads, these constructive, proper roads have become like a good rut that we fall into repeatedly. We do not want to avoid or be too quick to jump out of these constructive, useful ruts. We want to be consciously aware of them and choose to build new, more loving, and proper habits, by God's Grace.

We had asked that you give the defective habits, ruts, a dishonoring, discrediting, "make fun of" name. Now we ask that you provide constructive, helpful habits and a FUN, LOVING, JOYFUL, or BELOVED name. When one of these reappears, we treat it as a beloved, welcome guest. We may say something like this: "Here comes my beloved *name*, which is loving, constructive, or valuable. I now choose to have it increased. My Higher Power, I now ask that You take 'it' and let me do only Your Will. I now turn to the solution, accepting the answer."

BUILDING A SPIRITUAL ROAD MAP

This process of building a spiritual Road Map must include our spiritual, mental, physical, emotional, and social. This also includes all the crossroads, stoplights, detours, washouts, and dangerous intersections, as well as warning signs. When we run into problems, we can change directions if we choose. Our Program is a mind training and spiritual awakening process.

The exercise below is most effective just after we have entered one of our constructive, helpful, positive, or loving experiences. Keep this format handy for the next time it happens. Because we are dealing with habits, we will have a next time. Take one of your good experiences, one that you want to see increased, and respond to the following. REMEMBER WE ARE GOING BACKWARDS IN THIS PROCESS.

Example for the positive map. In this example, **AI** will answer the eight questions with an experience. After each response, **AI** will be shown that there is a solution. If **AI** chooses, he can apply our Program and build an early warning signal system.

1. State the constructive, useful, positive, or loving experience. (What is this pattern's beloved name?)

AI: I was praying after I left the meeting that I could get someone to sponsor, to share the Program with. I just got home and received a call from a guy who attended tonight's meeting, asking me to sponsor him. Was my prayer answered quickly or what? (The Second Spiritual Gift is love – to share the love I am that we all are.) My beloved name is “Miracle Ready.”

AI realized the second part of our Step Twelve is “...to carry this message...” This is sharing, and sharing is a form of love, so this is an expression of our Second Spiritual Gift – Love.

2. Often, we get early useful signals before the experience happens. At what point did you see it coming?

AI: I felt that I shared from my heart at the meeting, and people came up and thanked me for sharing, so I am not surprised that I received a Miracle but that was fast.

Lou-is assured **AI** if he asked his Higher Power to use him, He would.

3. At what juncture could you have increased the flow - before turning it off?"

AI: When **Lou-is** told me to ask to be used, I could have acted much sooner.

The question is will **AI** stay “Miracle Ready” and will he listen to his sponsor and act sooner?

4. When did you get the thought or feelings, “to say, do this or that to open up more to the experience?”

AI: I knew I had to speak up at the meeting on the subject that was so dear to my heart, sharing our Program with those who still suffer. I can identify with those; in fact, I think we still suffer at times.

Lou-is has been telling **AI** to speak up when he feels in his heart it could matter. **AI** remembered that.

5. When was the last time you did, said, thought, or felt this same pattern? The time, place, person, or type?

AI: I felt the same deep gratitude as I did when I believed that my sponsor **Lou-is** saw the good in me and the unexpressed love I had. I realized the possibility that I too may be able to share myself.

When **AI** was doing his “WHEN AM I MOST LIKELY TO” LISTS, he could see that when he felt love, gratitude, or the Omnipresence of his Higher Power, they all felt like a deep love.

6. Any unrelated stuff going on? Any changes, good or bad: physical, mental, social, emotional, spiritual?

AI: My sponsor got me to help with our once-a-year fundraiser for our Central Service Office. I was part of the Weekend in SA with AA, serving as the Coffee Chairperson. I know I will work with dedicated people. I just love service work.

AI's sponsor has been telling **AI** to be willing to be used instead of being a user. What a difference this has made. When **AI** goes to meetings all over town, people remember him. You would think **AI** is some rich or powerful person.

7. Any anniversaries, birthdays, special events nearby?

AI: Yes, my Alcoholics Anonymous' birthday is just around the corner, and I hit great gratitude, highs, and lows around this time.

It did not take much reflection for **AI** to remember the last few anniversaries of his marriage, and his Alcoholics Anonymous birthdays always bring intense emotions. As he plans a special event, he is likely to become closed off, and when the anniversary of that event comes to mind, it evokes a deep emotional response. It is safe to say that when any of that is going on, he is likely to have mood swings.

8. Are you feeling any great emotions about any area or anything (not just this one experience) now?

AI: Yes, I am. Through this miracle, I've come to realize that my prayers are answered quickly. I am overcome with gratitude. I have a deep affection for this way of life. Until I entered the Program, I never thought I could have my prayers answered. I never thought I could feel the love I do now. I did not believe anyone would respect me enough to ask for my help.

AI is learning to extend unconditional love to others. The nature of his illness is selfish and self-centered, and now he prays to be used, asking for nothing in return. A secret he had never shared with anyone was that, deep in his heart, mind, and soul, he had always been a loving person. He could not share the depth of that love, giving or receiving. This Program is so powerful that we find ourselves living an unselfish way of life. Now, out of enlightened self-interest, he consciously and consistently extends love to all.

Recognizing our everyday miracles, occasionally experiencing an awakening, and documenting them promptly can help develop an applicable Early Warning System. It can enrich and expand the good experiences in our lives. Make copies of the next page with the eight questions or write them on a card and carry them with you. When an opportunity comes, you may use this tool.

Build a Positive Spiritual Road Map by following **AI's** example.

1. State the constructive, helpful, positive, or loving experience. (What is this pattern's beloved name?)
2. Most of the time, we get early proper signals before the experience happens. At what point did you see it coming?
3. At what juncture could you have increased the flow - before turning it off?
4. When did you get the thought or feelings to say or do this or that to open more to the experience?
5. When was the last time you did, say, thought, or felt this same pattern? Note the SAMENESS: time, place, person, or type.
6. Any unrelated stuff going on? Any changes, good or bad: physical, mental, social, emotional, spiritual?
7. Any anniversaries, birthdays, or special events nearby?
8. Are you feeling any great emotions about any area or anything (not just this one experience) now?

DAY 33 - Today is _____

STEP TEN: CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY AND WHEN WE WERE WRONG PROMPTLY ADMITTED IT. (PERSEVERANCE)

ACTION – STEP TEN CONTINUED - DAILY JOURNAL

1. Workshop assignment – Read the information outlining the concept of using a daily journal, noting its benefits for you, and underlining those ideas that may be useful to you.
2. Build your example of a daily journal using **AI's** example. Make copies of the Worksheet on page 71 or make up your own.

WHAT'S IN A JOURNAL FOR US? I find it helpful to keep a daily journal. If we focus on one area at a time, as suggested, we'll find the following useful. If we keep this journal on our Heart's Desire, that is what we want most in life, for forty (40) days, many of our habits, thoughts, and feelings will show up. We will be able to see what we believe by what we are experiencing repeatedly. A shortcut to a personal inventory is simply this: whatever we are experiencing is what we think, not what our conscious mind is telling us.

MINIMAL TIME COMMITMENT: Why forty days? We will go through a complete cycle, encompassing Spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional aspects. Going through a full cycle, we experience the different ways we react to the same conditions.

THREE MINDSETS: When we come to the Program, we have the mindset of a user. We were using people, places, and things to blame or explain why we were happy or prosperous, sad, or failing. As a user, we view others using us or as us using others. With a mindset of ownership, we recognize our responsibility for our life experiences and expect the same from others. The third mindset (Trust) is a willingness to trust our Higher Power. But we must be willing to own our personal "reality," and all its content, before we can turn it over.

As we see, our mindset and life cycle are intertwined. This has much to do with the way we are reacting. We cannot give away something we don't own. Most of us go back and forth between the three mindsets. To save space, you may choose to use these codes: MS (Mind Set) – O (Owner) – T (Trust) - U (User).

OUR HEART'S DESIRE: We believe that our Heart's Desire is the driving desire to be the Individual we were created as. We believe that we shall never be fulfilled trying to be something other than this. Our Heart's Desire is our Third Spiritual Gift.

DAILY JOURNAL FORM: At the top of a page, write out your Heart's Desire, something about which you are willing to do whatever it takes to have or be. Then draw a line down the center of the page. On one side, write the day and date – mindset – and what you did or did not do to contribute to your Heart's Desire. On the other side, note the day and date – mindset – and what you did or did not do that was contrary to your Heart's Desire. As you begin to see some of your patterns, write these on a separate page. Add these patterns to your Early Warning Sign System.

Lou-is: AI, I would like you to build an example of this daily journal. This daily journal can give you great insight into your Higher Self and your personal "reality." You will recall I had told you that a shortcut to your real inventory is to note what you are experiencing, not what your conscious mind is telling you. To start, take today's experiences and put them on the sample sheet.

AI: [1](contributed to) I don't trust or like Sam, but I am trying to love my enemies, so I prayed to extend him love. I don't have to trust another human or myself when I **trust** my Higher Power.

[2] (Contrary to) I did not want to go to work today, so I lied, I am a **User**.

[3] (Contributed to) I must be growing because I did not blame my wife, Allienon, for my mistake, so I am the **Owner** of my stuff.

[4] (Contrary to) I did not want to use my car because I was low on gas, so I lied to Juan to use his; yes, I can see I am a **User** of Juan and his car.

[5] (Contributed to) As I can **trust** my Higher Power this morning, I realized His Presence.

[6] I still think I can lie, use others, and get away with it; if the boss finds out I've **lied again**, I'm gone.

AI: This does not look so good when I see it on paper. I am sold on this idea, so I'll do it in forty days.

My Heart's Desire Is: [Example]

To awaken to the Three Spiritual Gifts and consciously and consistently live them.

MS (Mind Set) = O (Owner) T (Trust) U (User)

DATE	MS	CONTRIBUTED TO	DATE	MS	CONTRARY TO
<i>09/30 2011</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>[1] I extended love to Sam today silently when he lied</i>	<i>09/30 2011</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>[2] I told (lied to) the boss I was sick to get off early</i>
<i>09/30 2011</i>	<i>O</i>	<i>[3] I didn't blame Allienon for my mistake</i>	<i>09/30 2011</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>[4] I told Juan I had a flat tire so we could use his car.</i>
<i>09/30 2011</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>[5] I consciously experienced the Presence today</i>	<i>09/30 2011</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>[6] I was full of self-centered fear; when the boss called, I lied to him</i>

[illegible]

DAY 34 - Today is _____

STEP ELEVEN - (SPIRITUAL)

SOUGHT THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION TO IMPROVE OUR CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH GOD, AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM, PRAYING ONLY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL FOR US AND THE POWER TO CARRY THAT OUT.

ACTION: STEP ELEVEN

1. Workbook assignment - Underline what's most useful for you, write it down, and follow the suggestions.
2. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is pages 85 - 88, reading time 6 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
3. Today's reading assignment from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is Step Eleven - Average reading time 20 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
4. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working in this Forty Day Commitment? Give examples.
5. Brief Step Eleven Inventory
 - 5a. On a separate sheet of paper, write: (a.) What was or is your resistance to a Higher Power, religion, or a Spiritual way of life? (b.) The types of prayers and meditations you have used. (c.) How effective were they?
 - 5b. Sum up your present prayer and meditation practices.
 - 5c. Make a list of resources available to you that you could seek out to improve your understanding and practice of prayer and meditation. One example: it is helpful to start our day with pages 86 through 88 of Alcoholics Anonymous for the next forty days.
 - 5d. List of those people who may be able to help you on your spiritual journey.

SEEKING - Step Eleven directs us to the most essential part of our human condition; that is, to be our Real Self, the Individual we were created as. In other words, His Will for us. We are to ask for the power to carry it out. As we had said before, we shall never be joyous, happy, and free until it is realized. Once we have discovered where the power is and what we want that power for, it becomes a much more straightforward decision. All of life is a process. This Step also suggests that we continue to seek through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with this Higher Power.

WHAT ABOUT AFFIRMATIONS

Lou-is: In the early years, I thought affirmations were so phony. At some point, I realized the "good" was what I wanted my mind filled with instead of the negative. I would memorize a few affirmations at a time. Once these became a habit, I would find myself thinking and saying one of these affirmations instead of automatically responding with something negative.

Sam met an old high school friend he hadn't seen in years. His friend had become successful. Sam asked him how he had become so successful. My friend replied that he went to finishing school. Sam asked him, "What did you learn in finishing school?" He replied: "I learned to say **fantastic**, instead of B.S."

I turn to my affirmation and Spiritual readings each morning as I create my day, using them as a thought starter. I intend to focus my attention on affirming what I want instead of what I don't like. For example, I pick an idea from the "Most accomplished list", and from the list of Loves and their elements, and the list of our Higher Power's Attributes, His nature or characteristics (page 80).

SIMPLE SUGGESTIONS

Lou-is: Here are five parts of a process for praying that are useful for me:

1. I must believe, feel, and know there is a Higher Power, a Power Greater than myself.
2. At some level, I must believe, feel, and know I have the right to ask for what I need, want, and desire. I think this Higher Power has placed the need, want, and desire in my heart, mind, and soul, but I understand what He passed on is filtered through my personal “reality.” I feel sure He placed in my heart and mind His will for me and knows how to fulfill it, if I will let Him.
3. Next, I ask this Higher Power for what I need, want, and desire. I must give this some thought before I ask, like “What’s this for?” I add the disclaimer, “If it is Your Will, please. If it is not Your Will, please, please don’t give it to me.”
4. I thank Him, believing it will be done.
5. I let it go and stay out of the way of the process.

Practice every day until it becomes a habit, then it's automatic. **Lou-is:** At times, I must spend more time on one or more of these five parts. I meditate on that part for a while, then return to the process. I remind myself that I cannot get good enough to earn God’s grace or be bad enough to keep His grace from flowing to me.

WHEN I LOVE SOMEONE, I OFTEN THINK OF THEM

Lou-is: If I love someone with all my heart, mind, and soul (our Father), I will think of that person often. If I knew of someone who had what I wanted (our Father), I would find a way to communicate (pray). Once I realized that there is a Power Greater than myself, one that can and would do for me what I could not do for myself, I began to communicate with Him. My motive hasn’t always been pure, but when I’ve asked with all my heart and mind, I’ve experienced functional solutions. I took the same pathway, practicing meditation. When I love someone (our Father) or know of someone who has what I want (our Father), I can’t get enough of them. I enjoy being near them, engaging in conversations, and listening to others talk about them. Prayer and meditation are spiritual principles, which means they are endless. The highest form of meditation is contemplation, that is, direct knowing. This is likely to come when we are still, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

ONE SOURCE, MANY CHANNELS

Al: I thought we were **not** to pray for our selfish ends. Are you saying that we are?

Lou-is: Asking our Higher Power for what we need at any given time is a way of including our Higher Power in every area of our lives. Many of us, for one reason or another, believe and feel there are some things we must do alone and unaided (as though our Higher Power cannot or will not help us with these “forbidden” areas). But on the contrary, we believe that we shall never experience true fulfillment being anything or anyone other than the individual He created us to be. In other words, in conscious union with our Higher Power’s Will for each of us. Turn your consciousness toward your Higher Power at each beginning. When you wake up, start anything, answer the phone, drive, or talk to someone else. Just remind yourself with a sacred word or name like “Father” or “God.” With each completion, say thanks to your Higher Power.

SPIRITUAL LEVELS

Spiritual Infant: - In the beginning, my cry for help was purely selfish. I was dependent with little or no choice, unable to do anything of value for myself alone and unaided.

Spiritual child: wanting God to take care of me and to fulfill my every want and need. It was a time of forming, learning what would please our Father, filled with questions about Him and the need for rules, guidance, safety, and belonging.

Spiritual adolescent: demanding the universe be as I wanted here and now, without being responsible, wanting to be a little creator, but couldn’t. I was looking for a Higher Power everywhere except where He is most intimately found at the center of our being.

Spiritual adult: I knew I was responsible for the decisions I made, but remembered our Father was and is the only real Source. By this time, I had stopped being a user and had become willing to be used by this

Higher Power. I often persisted in seeking Him by my efforts, demanding too much of my human condition. I had come to know a lot about God through study, prayer, meditation, and sharing with others. I experienced many expressions of His Presence, thinking that these effects were the same as God's Presence, the Cause.

Spiritual elder: For a few rare moments, I have experienced being a Spiritual elder. Sharing my life as an agent of our Father, knowing that I was dependent and resisting it not. By living the Alcoholics Anonymous way of life, Spiritual studies, prayer, meditation, and affirmations, I come to know about God. Of course, that's not the same as experiencing Him. I directly experienced a conscious contact with our Father through contemplative meditation, and now I have a better chance of being a Spiritual elder. I experience a direct conscious union with our Father's Will for me. I humbly seek to realize His Presence in everyone and everything and to know His will for me. I believe everyone experiences these levels, often not aware of what they are, and we call them endless names. I have experienced all these levels in the same day, possibly even within the same hour.

AS YOU BELIEVE

Lou-is: I made up rules about when and how God would help me and when He would withhold and punish me. So far, God does not go with my private rules. A wise teacher said, "It is done unto you as you believe." We must identify all our personal "reality" (rules) to seek more of God's Will and the power to carry it out.

To receive God's help, He must have our consent. It is hard for us to give our consent when we are so consumed by ourselves. Therefore, prayer and meditation are vital to our recovery, to our awakening. However, when you turn toward a Higher Power at a given time, it is the best way. Each time we seek to improve our conscious contact with our Higher Power, the better receivers and givers we become. We cannot make ourselves grateful any more than we can make ourselves love. These are gifts. However, we can keep turning to the God of our understanding, and we can choose to make a habit of it. By building a habit of this, we open ourselves to both receiving and giving consistently.

ALL HAVE A PURPOSE

Lou-is: Whoever created us as individuals must have a purpose for each of us, and this must be His Will for each of us. If we can be in conscious union and harmony with His Will and His Purpose, we are likely to experience our fulfillment. In that case, we would surely want to improve our understanding and experience of His Will and have the power to carry it out. Many teachers are waiting to share with you. "When the student is ready, the teacher appears. When the teacher is ready, the student appears." Seek them. Be as willing, honest, and open-minded as you can.

Our human condition fosters the illusion that we are separate from all others. Therefore, we need prayer and meditation to bring us home to an experience of conscious union, to healing, to wholeness, to fulfillment.

GOD'S INDIVIDUAL WILL FOR EACH

Finding our Heart's Desire, our purpose, our mission, God's individual Will for each of us, a Higher Power that can and will do for us that we cannot do for ourselves, is the focus of this workbook.

To help you find your Heart's Desire and purpose, our mission is to visit our website www.12stepworkbook.org, click on Workshops – Free Downloads – Awakening to Your Mission: A Spiritual Gift.

DAY 35 - Today is _____

STEP TWELVE - HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AS THE RESULT OF THESE STEPS, WE TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE TO ALCOHOLICS, AND TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS. (AWAKENING, SERVICE, PRACTICE)

ACTION: STEP TWELVE

Today's Mission Statement: We begin working on our Step Twelve today. We will continue this vital part of our process, which is a design for living, to the end of this Forty-Day Commitment.

1. Workbook assignment - Underline what's most useful for you, write it down, and follow the suggestions.
2. Today's reading assignment from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is the chapter on Step Twelve, pages 106-125—average reading time: 39 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
3. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.

Lou-is: Al, our Program offers us ways to experience fulfillment beyond any of our illusions and to deal with our human condition at each level where we are willing and able to apply these Spiritual principles. When we fall into the old self-centered ruts, we have the tools to get out quickly. If we choose, we can get out of ourselves by sharing our experience, strength, and hope. We can do this one-on-one, in meetings, and in groups of Program friends. Step Twelve embodies all three Spiritual Gifts. It is our choice at what level we will share these Gifts.

Al: I do see how important it is to pass on what we're given. I put my name and phone number on the newcomer's pack, but no one called me.

Lou-is: That's a good idea, but I have another suggestion that never failed to work for me. Before I take any Program action, I seek the guidance of my Higher Power. I share whatever comes to mind that could be useful. I get the name, phone number, or contact information from the newcomer. When I feel down or just want to share the Program with someone, I call that newcomer and share what's given me. Perhaps the simple, basic questions newcomers ask:

"Do you have a Big Book? Do you have a sponsor? Where and when are you going to meetings? Are you able to get to meetings or talk to a member of AA?"

I would ask them if they had any questions. I would then let that person know how they could contact me. If I can get out of myself, even for a minute or two, I am uplifted.

THE MESSENGER IS THE MESSAGE

Whatever area we have applied the Steps to and whatever degree of healing we have experienced, we must "give it away to keep it." We share our experience, strength, and hope with each other, so we may enjoy living to the fullest.

IF YOU WANT LOVE, PLANT LOVE SEEDS

The second spiritual gift is the awakening to the Love that we are; that all of us are. We're created in the image and likeness of our Creator, and we believe that this Creator is Love, and, therefore, so are we. The second part of Step Twelve is: "...we tried to carry this message." This is sharing; this is love. We give but little when we give of our possessions; it is when we give of ourselves that we give. In the act of giving, passing on what we have received, we realize that giving and receiving are the same. The only way we can become a master receiver is to share with others everything we want for ourselves. We can love because our deepest nature is love.

DAY 36 - Today is _____

STEP TWELVE - HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AS THE RESULT OF THESE STEPS, WE TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE TO ALCOHOLICS, AND TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS. (AWAKENING, SERVICE, PRACTICE)

ACTION: STEP TWELVE

1. Workbook assignment: The first three actions center on the Three Spiritual Gifts, embodied in this process, but become clear in Step Twelve. Take Actions 1,2,3.
2. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is Chapter 7, Working with Others, pages 89-103, reading time 29 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
3. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you are currently working on in the Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.

FIRST SPIRITUAL GIFT AWAKENING PRESENCE

Step Twelve opens with: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps. Working the first eleven Steps will assure a personality change, a shift in our perception sufficient to cause recovery, a spiritual awakening. Reread pages 569-570 (3rd edition or pages 567-568, 4th edition) of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our old mask (personality) has been removed, well, some of it. We wake up in a place where we have always been, our Father's House.

The first Spiritual Gift: Awakening to the Presence of our Higher Power and in conscious union with this Presence. "Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a Power greater than ourselves. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this Power? Well, that's precisely what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself, which will solve your problem." (Alcoholics Anonymous page 45 reprinted with permission) The main object of this workbook is in concert with that mission. This spiritual awakening is the first of our three primary goals of this workbook.

ACTION (1)

If you have had a spiritual awakening, sum up what that experience has meant to you. Share this experience. Write your response.

SECOND SPIRITUAL GIFT: LOVE

WE TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE – "Practical experience shows that nothing will so much ensure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. This is our **twelfth suggestion**: Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail. Remember, they are very ill. Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends - this is an experience you must not miss. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives." (Alcoholics Anonymous page 89, reprinted with permission)

ACTION (2)

Write your response to the following, using a separate sheet of paper:

1. What healing experiences have you passed on?
2. You give but little when you give of your possessions; it is when you give of yourself that you truly give. When and how have you given of yourself?
3. How did you think and feel after you shared your experience, strength, and hope with another?

THIRD SPIRITUAL GIFT MISSION

...and to practice these principles in all our affairs - What we consistently practice, we get good at (loving stuff or sick stuff). We get more love by loving, more forgiveness by forgiving, and more understanding by understanding others. We do not have to agree with others, nor do we have to like them, but we need to love all others by wishing them well, by praying that each one realizes the Three Spiritual Gifts. All spiritual principles grow and expand with use. PRACTICE giving away everything you want. If you want corn, plant corn seeds; if you wish to love, plant love seeds. Walk your talk, and the rewards will be beyond your present belief. If we turn to do God's Will or Work, we're given the power to carry that out.

The Third Spiritual Gift: Awakening to the individual created Self, with purpose and meaning. In other words, consciously live our Heart's Desire, God's Will. The third part of Step Twelve: "...and to practice these principles in all our affairs." The only way we can fully realize who we are is by sharing what we are currently becoming through this process. When we're God-centered, even for a moment, we have all the power and wisdom we need. In that moment of awakening, we experience the Presence, the Love that we are, and the created Individual we are. We are told or shown what to do, say, think, and feel in a way we can currently hear, understand, and follow. The more we practice this way of life, the better we can get at it.

ACTION (3)

Write your response to the following:

1. As an individual, how do you practice the Presence of your Higher Power?
2. As an individual, how do you practice sharing the love you are?
3. As an individual, how do you practice your purpose, value, mission, or heart's desire?

DAY 37 - Today is _____

STEP TWELVE - HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AS THE RESULT OF THESE STEPS, WE TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE TO ALCOHOLICS, AND TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS. (AWAKENING, SERVICE, PRACTICE)

ACTION: STEP TWELVE

1. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is Chapter 8, To Wives, pages 104-121, reading time 35 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.

2. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples. Use the facing pages to add your comments.

Lou-is: Most of us do not live on some island alone. Our disease affects all of those around us. If we have a live-in relationship, this chapter can be helpful. Those who live with someone in the Program may experience an equal feeling of hopelessness. If you are not the one with the primary problem and still suffering, this Program can be a lifesaver and life fulfiller.

Al: Going through the first nine Steps, I realized one little fact: I am so glad I am not married to anyone as sick as I am. This disease has taken me down some dark roads, and I am just now able to see how wrong I have been.

Lou-is: Go through this chapter following this: "...we beg of you to be fearless and thorough." In this chapter, as you identify what the important ideas are, write them down. Write a brief plan of action. Write what you're willing to do differently.

DAY 38 - Today is _____

ACTION: STEP TWELVE

1. Workbook assignment - The following three actions help us center on **PART TWO: A DAILY PRACTICE OF THE THREE SPIRITUAL GIFTS**. Take Actions 4,5,6.
2. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is Chapter 9 - The Family Afterward, pages 122-135, reading time 28 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
3. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.

BUILDING A NEW PERSONAL "REALITY" - We cannot imagine a better set of conscious habits than the Three Spiritual Gifts. Our Program is a spiritual awakening and mind training process. Once awakened, we can learn how to stay awake.

ACTION (4)

A suggestion for each of the forty-day practice periods: On awakening, consciously turn to the Spiritual Gift you chose for the day. Choose an attribute of your Higher Power. Choose one of the six loves or an element of love. Choose a characteristic of the most accomplished people throughout recorded history for the day's practice (a list of these follows). Check the detailed example on page 81 and the form for the Daily Practice sheet on page 82.

THOUGHT STARTERS: A list of our **Higher Power's attributes**. Create your list.

Love	Consciousness	Omnipresence (Always Present)
Life	Soul	Omniscience (All Knowing)
Truth (Reality)	Spirit	Omnipotence (All Power)
Wisdom	Intelligence	Universal Principles (Spiritual)

THOUGHT STARTERS: The **six loves**.

Agape	Philia	Primal Love
Storge	Eros	Self-love

THOUGHT STARTERS: Nine common, everyday **elements of love**.

Patience	Humility	Good Temper – Good sense of humor
Kindness	Courtesy	Innocence
Generosity	Unselfishness	Sincere

There are many ways to give of ourselves through our program. Ask your Higher Power, Higher Principles, to serve, and it will come. As with the First Gift's Thought Starters, check out other sources.

THOUGHT STARTERS FOR LIVING PRINCIPLES: **Characteristics** of one hundred of the **most accomplished** people throughout history. They had common characteristics that we can share. All had a greater cause, not always spiritual. Living this Program beyond our egos and awakening to the Three Spiritual Gifts is a Higher Purpose.

Higher Purpose	Trust	Resiliency
Focus	Perseverance	Independent
Prepared	Creative	Courage
Conviction	Risk takers	Commitment
Faith	Curiosity	

ACTION (5) DAILY PRACTICE FOR GREATER BENEFITS: Until it's a habit, turning consciously toward the Presence of your Higher Power, set up a physical reminder, write down your insights.

MENTAL LEVEL: For best results, set up a plan of action, which includes all levels of consciousness daily.

SPIRITUAL LEVEL: Seek through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with the Three Spiritual Gifts. Daily, remove obstacles blocking the spiritual flow of Divine energy. Co-create a loving environment for our Three Spiritual Gifts to thrive. When we are in conscious union with our Spiritual Gifts, we intuitively know we are on the right path. We're motivated to expand our Spiritual practice. When in conflict with God's Will, we're filled with fear, anger, and negative emotions, and the pain motivates us to turn once again to our Spiritual Source.

MENTAL LEVEL: "...for after all God gave us brains to use." (Page 86, Alcoholics Anonymous). We're always thinking, unless we are in a coma, so why not choose what we want to think about? With a bit of practice, we can do this. Throughout the day, we remind ourselves to think of the spiritual gift of the day. The first thing we know is that we have a habit of thinking the thoughts we want. All action starts with some level of consciousness. When we are running on automatic (habit), that consciousness is likely to be the giving of our silent consent. *Mental Motivators:* thoughts that move us toward our Heart's Desire inspire us; show us we are on the right path. Those thoughts that turn us away from our Heart's Desire show us that we are off the path. If we choose, we can use this information to get back on the path.

PHYSICAL LEVEL: We live in a physical body and world. *Physical Motivators:* When taking care of our physical bodies and world, we're on the path. When we neglect our physical bodies and the world, we receive warning signals that motivate us to get back on track. Life is in motion; we're on the move. Why not act in concert with the spiritual gift?

EMOTIONAL LEVEL: These Three Spiritual Gifts, with their attributes, elements, and characteristics, are vital to our lives because they are our true nature. By consciously and consistently practicing these gifts, we open ourselves to that spiritual flow. The more impassioned these gifts, the more effective this human condition becomes. *Emotion Motivators* guide us toward our Spiritual Gifts in a positive flow of Divine Energy, while also moving us away from what's not through pain.

SOCIAL LEVEL: The way we're created, we cannot live alone. *Social Motivators:* When we join in our common welfare, being helpful, constructive, and joyful, we're motivated to share. When we're withholding, withdrawing, we will fail, and the pain of failure can motivate us to change.

ACTION (6) At the end of each day or the next morning, make short reviews of your practice experience. Use the format for Step Ten Daily Journal, page 71. What contributed to and what was contrary to the practice of my spiritual gift (s) for the day.

A DAILY PRACTICE EXAMPLE:

The First Spiritual Gift: Awakening to the Presence of our Higher Power.

The Second Spiritual Gift: Awakening to the Love that we are that all of us are.

The Third Spiritual Gift: Awakening to the individual Self, with purpose and meaning.

Al Kohallek's Example: Al chose the Second Spiritual Gift.

A Daily Practice Supplement is on page 82.

1. On awakening each morning, turn your consciousness toward the Love you are.

Al: ***When I awakened this morning, I realized how important Love is to me.***

2. Choose one element of Love you can share with others today.

Al: ***Today I choose patience.***

3. Practice this element of love throughout this day, if possible, at all levels.

Al: Mentally, ***I will make a note of when I am patient and when I am not.***

Physically, ***I will patiently work on my project today.***

Emotionally, ***I am willing to channel my emotional energy toward love with patience.***

Socially, I am willing to be patient with all those I meet ***today.***

Spiritually, ***I am willing to trust God for all the results, so I can be patient.***

DAILY PRACTICE

Date ____ / ____ / ____

1. On awakening this morning, I turned my consciousness toward Your Presence, Father, the Love I am, and the individual I was created as. I am filled with gratitude for what You have in mind for me today. Each day, I will focus on one of the three Spiritual Gifts or some part of my Heart's Desire. Today I choose to focus on:

2. Each day, I will choose one of God's main Attributes, one element of love, or one of the characteristics of the most accomplished people to focus on. Today I choose:

3. I will practice this Attribute or element of love or characteristics throughout this day, at all levels:

Spiritually:

Mentally:

Physically:

Emotionally:

Socially:

A DAILY INVENTORY: The next morning, Al reviewed the day before as to how well he did with his daily practice. Others may do their inventory the same day while it's fresh in their minds. He used the Step Ten Daily Journal format, noting what contributed to and what was contrary to his Spiritual Gifts. By the time Al completed a full forty days on each of the Three Spiritual Gifts, he had a pretty good idea of what worked and didn't work for him.

STEP TWELVE - HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AS THE RESULT OF THESE STEPS, WE TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE TO ALCOHOLICS, AND TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS. (AWAKENING, SERVICE, PRACTICE)

ACTION: STEP TWELVE

1. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is Chapter 10, To Employers, pages 136-150, reading time 28 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
2. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.
3. Note those essential ideas that you identify with and write what you would do differently now. Also, ask yourself if you have forgiven your past and present authorities? If there is still a problem, go back to the forgiveness list page 31.

Al: I believe every employer should read this chapter; it would give them valuable tools. The employees would also gain a new understanding.

Lou-is: I gained a new understanding during a workshop on authorities and my Higher Power. I realized the importance of forgiving every authority. I know that every judgment of an authority I made, I projected onto Our Father, my Higher Power. For example, I knew my dad loved my brother more than me, and I think you would have loved him more than me, too. He would give my brother the good stuff. One morning during my meditation while "kissing up to Our Father", I found myself saying something like, "Father, I'm sorry I'm not the Son you wanted." I remembered that I said the same to my dad, "I'm sorry I'm not the son you wanted," that is, like my brother, to whom you gave all your love.

AL'S SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION If everything stops working the way it once did, it's possible you are going through a Spiritual Transformation. Visit our website at www.12workbook.org to download a copy of **Al's Spiritual Transformation** or pick one up at our office. Our address is 16607 Blanco Suite 401, San Antonio, TX 78216.

What is a Transformation Cycle? How does it work? What is it in me? As spiritual beings in a human experience, we pass through many different types of cycles at every level, both short-term and long-term. Each 24-hour day, we're reborn each morning; we experience some tiny growth, and then we "die" each night when we go to sleep. Then we have the forty-day cycle, and of course, a human lifetime cycle spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially, symbolized by human birth, infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and the elder. The Spiritual Transformation Cycle is far more intense, giving a profound meaning to the idea that we must die before rebirth. Jesus demonstrated a Spiritual Transformation cycle with his birth, life, death, and resurrection.

SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION is one of the greatest fulfillments we can experience in this human condition. One of the most fearful, painful, and dangerous experiences we can have. Sometimes it proves to be fatal. At some point in our lives, everything stops working, which is called the Dark Night Of The Soul. Our fighting or resisting the natural cycle can cause significant problems, fear, anger, and depression, destructive acting out, or turning on oneself. The more we try to live on yesterday's bread (experience), the more pain, frustration, anger, and fear we experience. I believe that many of us are destructive to ourselves and/or others. Our Higher Power or Higher Self will direct and guide us if we are willing to surrender to the process. Pain comes from our resistance – so let go and let our Father guide us Home.

DAY 40 - Today is _____

ACTION

1. Today's reading assignment from Alcoholics Anonymous is A Vision For You - pages 151-164, reading time 28 minutes. Highlight what is most important to you.
2. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you're currently working in this Forty-Day Commitment? Give examples.
3. Summary Questions – Now What?

WE BOTH RECEIVED A GIFT: A person that I could hardly stand asked me to help him with his Step work. This person feared that he could not stay sober with all the anger and negative stuff going on in his life. In the past, I resisted working with this person. If I were sincere about walking my talk, I knew then that I must share with that person. He began working the Steps as though his life depended on it. I believe it did. When I saw how hard he was working, I felt a surge of warmth and loving compassion for that person. I prayed with all my heart that he would get "it." Since that moment, I have never felt, no matter how "bad" I do, say, think, or feel, that I was a total loss. I knew there was someone out there who would help me, forgive me, and love me. The reason is simple enough; I had extended forgiveness and love to one I did not feel deserved it.

NOW WHAT - By now, we have gained a lot of information. The question is, what are we to do with it? Head knowledge can be helpful if we remember that's all it is. The longest distance to travel is from the head to the heart. There's no long-term change until both the head knowledge and heart experience are internalized. It's a new part of our personal "reality," a new habit of thought and feeling. The shortcut to our personal "reality" change is to walk our talk, to practice, practice, practice these principles in all our affairs.

BE QUICK TO FORGIVE: Can we share our Three Spiritual Gifts honestly, willingly, with an open mind, and a willingness to forgive all? As we awaken each day, let us choose to be as loving, wise, and valuable as we can by God's loving Grace. When we fall short, let us be quick to forgive all. Remember, what we can do is our responsibility; what we cannot do is God's.

Today's Mission Statement: Now that we are coming to the end of this Forty-Day Commitment, we may realize this is only a beginning. Now that we have a few more tools to practice this way of life with, we can choose what to do with them. Every area, every level has become an asset to the degree that we have received healing. To keep these gifts and to expand them, we must pass them on.

"When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Until then, I saw only my little reflection in that limited mirror of my personal "reality." I heard only the hum of my little voice as this limited "reality." But now face-to-face with Your Holy Attributes, Father, I live, move, and have my being in and through universal Principles. Just for this instant, I intuitively know even as I am known.

What we receive by our Higher Power's Grace, we become. We're wise to freely pass on what we have become by His Grace, consciously and consistently, which enables us to continue to awaken, expand, and grow.

Summary Questions - Now What? – And practice these principles in all our affairs.

1. What's your understanding of this statement: "Principles in all our affairs"?
2. What are the tools for living that you already have but have not used often?
3. As a result of working through this Forty-Day Commitment, what are the new tools or upgraded old tools for living you realized?

4. List at least ten ways you plan to practice these principles in all your affairs. Keep this list handy each day during your Daily Inventory until these become your new habit of thought and feeling, your transformed personal “reality.”

NOW I KNOW HOW TO DO A 12-STEP CALL: I was trying to work with a paraplegic, and it was not going well. Each morning, I would go by his apartment to see how the night went, and I would stop by after work to check on him. He would not sober up no matter what I did. I tried out everything the 12-Step athletes suggested, but nothing worked. One day, I had had it with him, and I began to pray something like this: *“Father, I don’t have a clue what to do with him. You take him and do whatever You will. I now surrender him completely to You. Let Your will be done, not mine.”*

I walked into his bedroom; he had a gun to his head, about to shoot himself. I began to yell at him to go ahead and pull the trigger. I told him he was nothing but a “blankity, blank” user. He was using his mom, everyone else, and me to convince them that he was a useless cripple. (I had never called anyone handicapped, a cripple. I knew how unfair that was.) I said that we would all be better off without him. He started crying and handed me the gun and sobered up.

I said to myself, “Now I know how to Twelve Step people. I need to be as mean and ugly as I can.” The next time, I got a guy who would not respond the way I thought he should. I was mean and ugly to him, and he hung up on me. I did find the key that day: It was a total and complete surrender of both the other person and me to **Our Father**.

YOUR CHOICE

Many choose to live in darkness with their eyes closed, their ears stuffed, their fists tightly closed, grasping nothing. With a closed mind focused on self, our emotions are fed with yesterday’s self-centered fears. We abused our physical bodies and used others as objects. We looked at people, places, and things for our worth, meaning, and purpose. Feasting on spiritual junk food, starving for a conscious contact with our Higher Power. We tried to control others and ourselves with guilt and punishment.

CHOOSE ONCE AGAIN

Suppose we’re willing to open our eyes, unplug our ears, open our hands to both receiving and giving, let our emotions flow in loving energy, and be open channels. In that case, we will receive everything we need to awaken. We will find the way and the power to “seek God, clean house, and help others.” We do not change the Divine Laws when we plant corn instead of wheat. We do exercise our power of choice. We can choose, but it is God who creates. Now, let us choose our Higher Power’s will and leave the results to Him.

IN CLOSING:

“Our book is meant to be suggestive only. We realize we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and us. Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come, if your own house is in order. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven’t got. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us.
Abandon yourself to God, as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny. May God bless you and keep you until then.” (Alcoholics Anonymous, page 164 reprinted with permission).

