

Arch to Freedom



Big Book Steps Workshop Guide

archtofreedom.au

Set Aside Prayer

God, please set aside everything I think I know about myself, my disease, the Steps, the Big Book, sobriety, and You.

Please help me to have an open mind so I may have a new experience and discover the truth.

Workshop program

Week 1	Introduction	P1
Week 2	Step 1	P2-3
Week 3	Steps 2 & 3	P4
Week 4	Step 4 – Moral Inventory	P5
Week 5	Step 4 – Resentments & Fears	P6
Week 6	Steps 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9	P7-11
Week 7	Steps 10, 11 & 12	P12
Week 8	Meditation	P10-12

To prepare for each week's workshop, please refer to the homework schedule on page 13.

Page differences for each edition

4th Edition	3rd Edition	Little Big Books
Page xxvii	Page xxv	Page xx
Page xxix	Page xxvii	Page xxii
Page xxviii	Page xxvi	Page xxi
Page xxix	Page xxvii	Page xxii
Page 11 Bill's Story	Page 11 Bill's Story	Page 11 Bill's Story

Look on the title page to find out which edition you have.

For the Newcomers

1. Your primary obligation is to be here every week. If you do not have transportation, your sponsor will help you make the necessary arrangements.
2. We realize some of you are in no condition to read the Big Book at this time. Therefore, we will read the appropriate parts of the Big Book to you. For those of you who have brought Big Books and are able to follow along, please do so. We will announce each passage by page number and paragraph before we read it.

If you are unable to read the book, please participate by listening. Keep in mind that, if you do what we ask you to do, which is to take the Steps as described in the Big Book, you will recover from alcoholism.

3. Although a written inventory is part of the Fourth Step, that doesn't mean you have to do the writing. The person who is sponsoring you through these sessions can write it for you.

For the Sponsors

1. Your time commitment to the newcomer is 7-8 weeks. After that, both you and the newcomer will be expected to sponsor other people through the sessions.
2. During the next two months, call or visit the newcomer frequently to see how he or she is doing and to offer encouragement and moral support.
3. Make sure you and the newcomer attend all the sessions together.
4. If needed, write the inventory based on what the newcomer tells you. Remember, the newcomer may not be able to complete the inventory without your assistance.
5. Share your guidance with the newcomer.
6. Answer any questions the newcomer may have about the AA program or the AA way of life.

Questions on beliefs in AA

Week
2

Circle either True or False.

1. If we are planning to stop drinking, all we have to do is not drink one day at a time. T / F
2. Once I take the Steps, I will have a partnership with my higher power. T / F
3. Once I fully understand God, I will be free from my alcoholism. T / F
4. The Big Book is the only book I need to read. T / F
5. It is not necessary to do Step 4 more than once. T / F
6. We can win the confidence of another alcoholic by relating to their experiences. T / F
7. Our purpose in sobriety is to get back into the mainstream of life. T / F
8. There are many different ways you can work this program. T / F
9. Our sobriety is our greatest possession. T / F
10. The authors of the Big Book encourage us to drink. T / F
11. Our main focus needs to be on the alcoholic, not on their family. T / F
12. It takes a long time to recover from alcoholism. T / F
13. The Steps are not required, they are suggested. T / F
14. Going to meetings and not drinking is vital to our recovery. T / F
15. Our common suffering is what holds us together. T / F

Considerations for Step One

Read 4th edition, pages XXV to 52.

1. Did I have an abnormal reaction to alcohol?
2. Did I crave alcohol when I put alcohol in my body?
3. Am I restless irritable and discontent, unless I can again experience the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once when taking a few drinks?
4. Am I willing to consider that unless I experience an entire psychic change there is very little hope of recovery?
5. Did I come in here to stop drinking or stop suffering?
6. Can I take or leave alcohol alone?
7. Was sufficient reason enough for me to stop or moderate or keep me sober?
8. Have I lost the power of choice in drink?
9. Is my so called will power practically non-existent?
10. Am I unable at certain times to bring into my consciousness with sufficient force the memory of suffering and humiliation of even a week or month ago?
11. Am I without defence against the first drink?
12. Can I choose to not drink?
13. Am I having trouble with personal relationships?
14. Can I control my feelings?
15. Am I a prey to misery and depression?
16. Am I having trouble making a living?
17. Am I full of fear?
18. Am I unhappy?
19. Do I feel I can't seem to be of real help to other people?
20. Can I stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge?
21. Sit with me myself and I, and really consider:

Am I willing to concede to my innermost self that I have no power and I need a new manager?

2 CAME TO BELIEVE THAT A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES COULD RESTORE US TO SANITY.

**Week
3**

Considerations for Step Two

Refer to pages 44-53.

1. Am I clear on what a real alcoholic is? p44
2. Am I clear on what a non-alcoholic is?
3. Am I willing to believe that I am suffering from an illness that only a spiritual experience will conquer?
4. Do I have the power to conquer my alcoholism?
5. Do I have the power to not drink? Why haven't you? p45
6. Did I become an alcoholic?
7. Was I crushed by a self-imposed crisis? (Or did someone else do it to me?)
8. Do I now believe or am I willing to believe that there is a power greater than myself?
9. What is my choice – God is either everything or nothing?

3 MADE A DECISION TO TURN OUR WILL AND OUR LIVES OVER TO THE CARE OF GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM.

Considerations for Step Three

Refer to pages 54-63.

1. Am I willing to ask God to take it away for good?
2. Have I made the decision that I want what the authors in the Big Book have?
3. Am I willing to go to any length to have a spiritual experience?
4. Do I believe that I am an alcoholic?
5. Do I believe that I can't manage my own life?
6. Do I believe that no human power could relieve me of my alcoholism?
7. Do I believe that God could and would if sought?
8. Am I convinced I am an alcoholic?
9. Am I convinced that I can't manage my own life?
10. Am I convinced that no human power could relieve me of my alcoholism?
11. Am I convinced that God could and would if sought?
12. Am I willing to consider that selfishness and self-centeredness is the root of my troubles?
13. Am I willing to consider that my troubles are of my own making?
14. Am I willing to make a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand him?
15. Do I want to be happy, joyous and free?

Step Four – Moral Inventory Guide

Read pages 64-71. Complete your moral inventory table: **(a)** Give examples on each item and **(b)** State **who** was affected.

1. Self-pity – feeling sorry for yourself
2. Self-justification – to give excuses
3. Self-importance – exaggerated opinion of self, condescending, self-righteousness, grandiosity
4. Selfishness – more concern for self than for others
5. Self-condemnation – self-criticism
6. Criticizing – the act of making judgments on others
7. Negative thinking – negative thoughts
8. Vulgar immoral thinking – crude thoughts, sadistic, homicidal etc.
9. Lying – to lie, insincerity – deceptive or hypocritical
10. Procrastination – to put off doing something,
11. Laziness – unwilling to work or exert oneself
12. Dishonesty – to falsely portray myself or to deceive
13. Impatience – to be impatient, Inconsiderate
14. Hate – strong feeling of dislike or ill will
15. Envy/jealousy – to desire what belongs to another OR to resent another for what they have
16. Gossip – to repeat idle talk or rumours that cause harm
17. Sexual misbehaviour – harmful relationships
18. Control, perfectionism
19. Anger, revenge
20. Sexism, racism, ageism
21. Violence: animals/people/institutions, aggression, cruelty, bullying, pushing
22. Others – that apply to you

Examples:

Character defect	Examples in my life	Who was affected (name the people)
Self-pity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felt so sorry for myself I attempted suicide • Never had a fair go • Born ugly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brother Mick • Mum • James • Allan
Gossip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talked about my brother to my mother 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mick • Mum • Joe
Self-justification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made excuses for why I drank • Always blaming others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My husband and children • Paul at work

Step Four – Resentments

- List people, institutions, or principles with whom you were/are angry.
- Why do you resent that person, institution or principle?
- What was my part?
 - How did I treat that person or institution?
 - Have I ever done what they did to me?
 - What do I do to keep the resentment alive?
- Underlying fears:
 - What do I fear I will not receive?
 - What am I afraid will or will not happen?
 - What do I fear they will do?

Example:

Who and Why <i>Refer 1 and 2</i>	How I treat them <i>Refer 3(a)</i>	Have I EVER done what they do? <i>Refer 3(b)</i>	How I keep resentments alive <i>Refer 3 (c)</i>	Fears <i>See 4 (a), (b) and (c)</i>
Mother abandoned me twice, treated me as less than my siblings, racist, judgemental, critical, self-opinionated, manipulative	Withhold love by not contacting her regularly, make sarcastic comments, lash out / react badly to her comments	I abandoned the father of my child, think I'm better than others, find fault all the time with everything	Re-runs in my head, justifying my behaviour towards her, talk about her to anyone who'll listen, mental conversations	She doesn't accept me for who I am, I will never get her approval. She will never love me as much as her other children. I'm alone, unloved, unlovable, not good enough

Step Four – Fears

Just list fears together. You may find some of them in the last column of the resentment table.

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

**Week
6**

Considerations for Step Five

Read pages 59-75.

1. Am I delighted?
2. Can I look the world in the eye?
3. Can I be alone at perfect peace and ease?
4. Have my fears fallen from me?
5. Have I begun to feel the nearness of my Higher Power?
6. Do I feel strongly that the drink problem has disappeared?
7. Do I feel I am on the broad highway walking hand in hand with the spirit of the universe?
8. Have I omitted anything?
9. Have I admitted I have no power over alcohol?
10. Have I admitted that I need a new manager?
11. Have I come to believe that a power greater than me can restore me to sanity?
12. Have I made that decision to turn my will and life over to the care of God as I understand him?
13. Have I made a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself?
14. Have I admitted to myself, God and another person the exact nature of my wrongs?
15. Is my work solid so far?
16. Are the stones properly in place?
17. Have I skimmed on the foundation?
18. Have I tried to make mortar without sand?

**6 WERE ENTIRELY READY TO HAVE GOD REMOVE ALL THESE
DEFECTS OF CHARACTER.**

Step Six

Read page 76.

1. Am I now ready to let God remove everything that is objectionable?
2. Can he now take them all every one?

7 HUMBLY ASKED HIM TO REMOVE OUR SHORTCOMINGS.

Step Seven Prayer

Page 76, paragraph 2.

Steps Eight and Nine

Begin making amends, seeking guidance through Step 11 meditation. Meditate after you pray; write down all the guidance on paper. Test the guidance against the 4 Absolutes — see p10. Read pages 84-103 (Steps 10-12).

Write an individual card for each amends you will make. See p9.

Before making your amends, check with your sponsor as to whether your amends would cause more harm.

Always gain consent first. To gain consent: “I have some amends to make to you. Are you open to hearing them?”. If the person is not, politely leave it there.

1. **Name the wrong:** “I was wrong when I...”
2. **Say:** “I am truly sorry. You did not deserve to be treated that way.”
3. **Ask about other harms:** “Is there anything else I’ve done that has caused you harm?”
4. **Ask:** What can I do to right these wrongs?”
5. **Be willing to follow through on the requests.** Exceptions would be to place yourself in danger or go against your values (theft, sex, dishonesty, deceit).

Listed below are the three suggested ways of making an amends.

1. **Face-to-face amends** – this is always recommended if you have gained consent to do so. Follow the script you have prepared on individual cards – see p9.
2. **Phone amends** – ask the person if they would like to receive the amends in person, on the phone, or in writing. Follow the script you have prepared on individual cards – see p9.
3. **Letter amends** – If the person harmed asks for written amends, here’s an example:

Dear,
 I’m writing this letter to make amends for the harm I caused you. I was wrong when I.....
 I am truly sorry. You did not deserve to be treated this way.
 Please let me know what I can do to right these wrongs with you.
 Also let me know if there are other ways I have harmed you and what I can do to right those.
 Sincerely, your name, phone number and mailing address.

Main card to use with ALL amends

I am now a sober member of AA and have learned that in order to stay sober I need to make amends for the harm I've caused others.

You are on my list and I would like to make amends to you; are you open to hearing them now or would you prefer to have them in writing?

GO TO INDIVIDUAL CARD (below)

Is there anything else that I've done that has caused you harm? ... **LISTEN**

You did not deserve to be treated that way.

What can I do to right these wrongs?... **LISTEN**

Individual card for EACH amends

Mum

I was wrong to withhold my love and shut myself off in my room instead of talk to you.

I was wrong to impose my self-pity on you.

I was wrong to not remember so many of your birthdays.

I was wrong when I spoke to you harshly but, most importantly,

I was wrong when I blamed you for all the things wrong in my life.

I am truly sorry. You didn't deserve to be treated that way.

GO BACK TO MAIN CARD (above)

Four “Absolutes” of the Oxford Group and the AA Four Standards

Week
6

Four “Absolutes” of the Oxford Group	AA Four Standards mentioned many times in the Big Book
Honest	Dishonest
Purity	Resentment
Loving	Fear
Unselfish	Selfish

4th Step Standards – Big Book, page 67, paragraph 2, lines 3-4.

10th Step Standards – Big Book, page 84, paragraph 2, lines 8-9.

Guidance from God	Guidance from Self
Honest	Dishonest
Pure	Resentful
Loving	Fearful
Unselfish	Selfish

Meditation

If I am not receiving thoughts when I listen, the fault is not God’s. Usually it is because there is something I will not do:

- Something wrong in my life I will not face and make right
- A habit or indulgence I will not give up
- A person I will not forgive
- A wrong relationship in my life I will not give up
- An amend/restitution I’m refusing to make
- Resistive to following God’s guidance

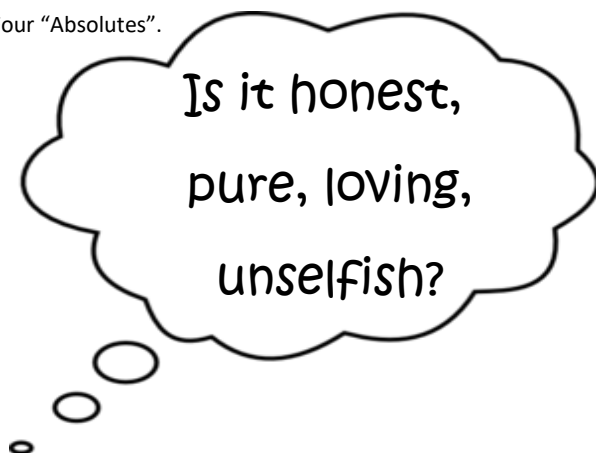
11th Step Meditation

Week
6

Find a quiet place, and let God in.

After practicing your 11th Step meditation, write down all thoughts received during meditation.

Test them with the Four "Absolutes".



Examples:

1. Give them a piece of my mind.
Is it honest, pure, loving, unselfish? No
2. Be patient with others today.
Is it honest, pure, loving, unselfish? Yes
3. I need to avoid that person.
Is it honest, pure, loving, unselfish? No
4. Be kind to others today.
Is it honest, pure, loving, unselfish? Yes
5. Accept others as they are.
Is it honest, pure, loving, unselfish? Yes

As you can see, numbers 2, 4 & 5 are honest, pure, loving, and unselfish. This indicates they are guidance from God and the others are from Self.

10 CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY AND WHEN WE WERE WRONG PROMPTLY ADMITTED IT.

Week
7

Considerations for Step Ten

1. How am I going to know if I am in fit spiritual condition?
2. Have I ceased fighting anything or anyone even alcohol?
3. Has sanity returned?
4. Am I seldom interested in liquor?
5. Do I recoil from alcohol as from a hot flame?
6. Do I react sanely and normally?
7. Does this happen automatically?
8. Do I have a new attitude towards liquor and is it without effort on my part?
9. Have I been placed in a position of neutrality safe and protected?
10. Has the problem been removed?
11. Am I willing to do the disciplines required to be kept in fit spiritual condition?

11 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.

Step Eleven

1. Was I resentful selfish dishonest or afraid today?
2. Do I owe an apology?
3. Have I kept something to myself that should be discussed with someone at once?
4. Was I kind and loving towards all today?
5. What could I have done better?
6. Was I thinking of myself most of the time today?
7. Was I thinking what I could do for others and what I could pack into the stream of life?
8. Have I asked for forgiveness and what corrective measures need to be taken?

12 HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AS THE RESULT OF THESE STEPS WE TRIED TO CARRY THE MESSAGE TO ALCOHOLICS, AND TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.

Step Twelve

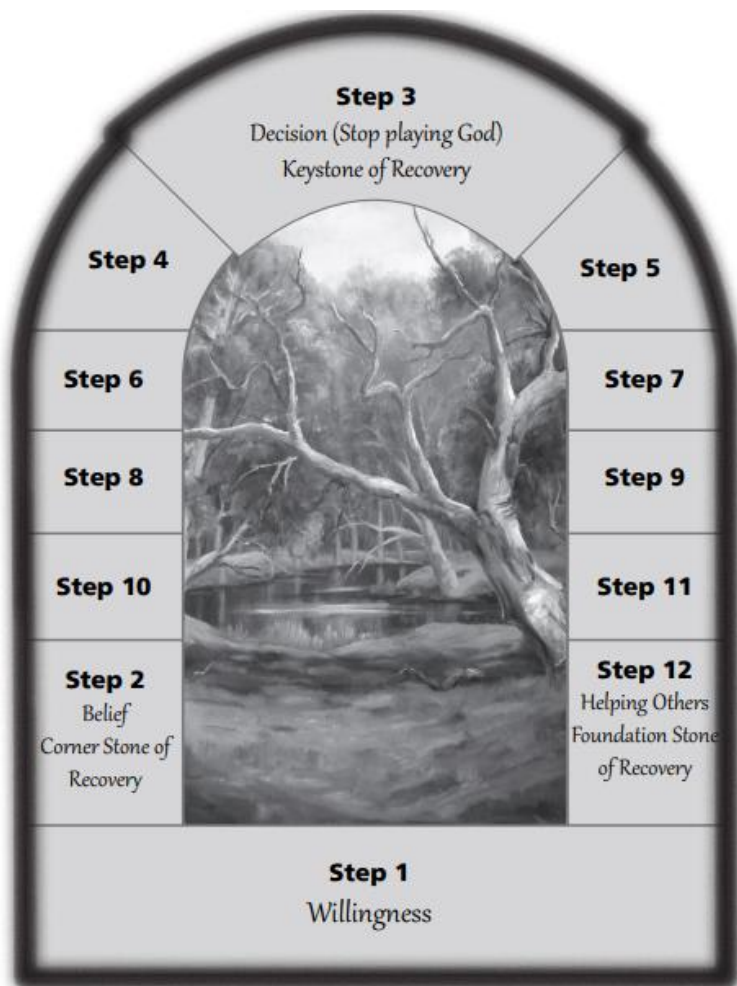
1. Do I want to quit for good and am I willing to go to any lengths to do so?
2. What would happen to AA if everyone did AA in sobriety the way I'm doing it today?
3. Do I have a foundation stone of my recovery?
4. Am I working with others and am I helping others?

Weekly Homework Schedule

1	Introduction	1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read 4th edition pages XXV to end of page 43 to prepare for Week 2. 	
2	Step 1	2-3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Step 1 – read pages 44-52. Answer p3 questions in writing.* Share your answers with your sponsor. Continue reading up to page 64 (Steps 2 & 3) to prepare for Week 3. 	
3	Steps 2 & 3	4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Step 2 – refer to pages 44-55. Answer p4 questions in writing.* For Step 3 – refer to pages 54-63. Answer p4 questions in writing.* Share your answers with your sponsor. Read pages 64-71 (Step 4) to prepare for Week 4. 	
4	Step 4 – Moral Inventory	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to pages 64-71. Complete your moral inventory table. Share your answers with your sponsor. 	
5	Step 4 – Resentments & Fears	6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete your resentments table. List your fears. Share your answers with your sponsor. Read pages 72-84 (Steps 5-9) to prepare for Week 6. 	
6	Steps 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9	7-11
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Step 5 – refer to pages 59-75. Answer p7 questions in writing.* For Step 6 – refer to page 76. Answer p7 questions in writing.* For Step 7 – read page 76, paragraph 2, the Step Seven prayer. Read pages 84-103 (Steps 10-12). For Steps 8 & 9 – write your amends, seeking guidance through Step 11 meditation and following guidelines on p8 and p9. Share your Step 5 & 6 answers with your sponsor and the progress you’ve made in writing your amends for Steps 8 & 9. Check with your sponsor as to whether your amends would cause more harm. 	
7	Steps 10, 11 & 12	12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Steps 10, 11 & 12 – refer to pages 84-103. Answer p12 questions in writing.* Share your answers with your sponsor. 	
8	Meditation	10-12

**In your written answers, avoid “yes” and “no” responses. Give examples of your own experience where relevant.*

Arch to Freedom



Online via Zoom
Tuesday nights at 7PM
During School Term
www.archtofreedom.au
Information: Courtney 0415811581