

My Fourth Step

(In the tradition of the Big Book of AA)

"In dealing with resentments on paper, we set them on paper. We listed the people, institutions or principles with whom we were angry."

"We asked ourselves, why we were angry?"

"On our grudge list we set opposite each name our injuries. Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal or sex relations which had been interfered with?"

"Referring to our list again. Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, and frightened and inconsiderate?"

There are various forms of doing a 4th step. It is always written down on paper. It seems to get clearer that way. There is the spread sheet format and the questions in a paragraph form. Let's start with the paragraph form.

"Who am I angry with?"

We start by writing the name of the person, principle or institution we are angry with. Examples: "Tom," (person) "my mother,"(person) "the church," (institution) "marriage" (institution) "letting go" (principle) "honesty" (principle) "being faithful" (principle)

More often than not most sponsors have people start with their family members growing up, i.e. mother, father, step-fathers, brothers, sisters, cousins. Childhood friends, teachers, coaches, clergy can also be included. Anybody you have a grudge against. Be thorough but not anal. This is about major grudges. But being thorough means that we need to look deep enough to see if we aren't harboring any resentment we are not aware of.

We then deal with people in our present live--Our spouse, our children, friends, sponsor, group members.

Why am I angry?

Answering this question involves writing out the situation and why you are angry. We are to pour our complaint, our frustration, the whole thing down. We don't filter, sift or make it presentable. It is embarrassing for us to admit how mad we