

WEEK #10: Chapter 5 — HOW IT WORKS (Step 4)

Read 64, paragraph 3 → page 66, paragraph 2 - Repeat this week.

Now we come to the second column. In column 3 ("Affects My" on our "Review of Resentments") we check off: Was it our Self-esteem, our Security, our Ambitions, our Personal or Sex relations which had been interfered with?

REFER TO BASIC INSTINCTS OF LIFE HANDOUT: Page 67 of this workbook

We go to the SELF-COLUMN (column 3). We take the Self-Esteem column and remembering always to work from top to bottom, beside each name and each cause we look to see if it was a threat to our self-esteem. Did it put us down in the eyes of other people? Did it embarrass us? If so, we put a little check mark there. We work from top to bottom with our mind on one thing only - is it a threat to self-esteem? Then we come back to the PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP COLUMN. Starting at the top and working to the bottom, is it a threat to our personal relationships? Then we come back to the SECURITY COLUMN, do MATERIAL first and then EMOTIONAL SECURITY. Then to the SEX COLUMN: Is it a threat to my ACCEPTABLE SEX LIFE with my spouse? Is it a threat to my HIDDEN SEX LIFE with my girl/boy-friend? We work each column separately, from top to bottom. And then we look at the AMBITIONS COLUMN. Everybody has plans regarding their future. That's a part of our make-up. And I'll get just as upset with you if you threaten what I'm trying to get as I am if you threaten what I've already got. The only way I can be upset is if you threaten one of the two; my basic instincts or my ambitions in those areas.

As I fill these out I begin to realize that I'm making an awful lot of check marks under one particular column. I finish this column and I realize something that's very important for me to know. First, in the first column I realize it's not how many people I'm actually mad at but how much they control my thinking. In the third column I realize it's not really what they did, it's how I reacted to it based on my basic instincts of life. Today, for the first time in my life, I realize where my anger comes from. It's my reaction based on my basic instincts of life to what other people do to me or what I think they do to me. Either one is just as bad! Now that I know where anger comes from I might be able to do something about it. But until I know that, I'll never get a handle on it, period, and that anger will keep giving me trouble for the rest of my life. I've learned three valuable things and all I've done is fill out the sheet. I have not analyzed it yet; I have only listed it.

DESCRIBE AND DISCUSS THIRD INSTRUCTION OF INVENTORY PROCESS

FOURTH STEP INVENTORY PROCESS THIRD INSTRUCTION OF THE INVENTORY PROCESS

When you have completed your "CAUSES" Column, opposite each of the events you have listed in column two, you will check, "Which Part of Self is Affected" in column three. Start with SOCIAL INSTINCTS from top to bottom. To clarify these columns, refer back to your BASIC INSTINCTS OF LIFE HANDOUT. This will help with the definitions of the words such as self-esteem, etc. Then do SECURITY INSTINCT from top to bottom, also SEX INSTINCT top to bottom and finally AMBITIONS top to bottom. Once again to clarify these columns refer back to your BASIC INSTINCTS OF LIFE HANDOUT.

ASSIGNMENT: Continue to read page 66, paragraph 3 to page 67, paragraph 1.

BASIC INSTINCTS OF LIFE THAT CREATE SELF

SOCIAL INSTINCT	SECURITY INSTINCT	SEX INSTINCT
<p>COMPANIONSHIP - Wanting to belong or to be accepted.</p> <p>PRESTIGE - Wanting to be recognized or to be accepted as a leader.</p> <p>SELF-ESTEEM - How we think of ourselves, high or low.</p> <p>PRIDE - An excessive and unjustified opinion of one's self, either positive (self-love) or negative (self-hate).</p> <p>PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS - Our relations with other human beings and the world around us.</p> <p>AMBITIONS - Our plans to gain acceptance, power, recognition, prestige, etc.</p> <p><i>(INCORRECT JUDGEMENT)</i></p>	<p>MATERIAL - Wanting money, things, property, clothing, etc. in order to be secure in the future.</p> <p>EMOTIONAL - Based upon our needs for another person or persons. Some tend to dominate others, some are overly dependant on others.</p> <p>AMBITIONS - Our plans to gain material wealth, or to dominate others, or to depend upon others.</p> <div data-bbox="771 661 1096 1123" style="text-align: center;"> </div>	<p>ACCEPTABLE - Our sex lives as accepted by society, God's Principles or our own principles.</p> <p>HIDDEN - Our sex lives that are contrary to either Society, God's Principles or our own principles.</p> <p>AMBITION - Our plans regarding our sex lives whether acceptable or hidden.</p> <p><i>(INCORRECT ACTIONS)</i></p>
<p>RESENTMENTS</p> <p>Feelings of bitter hurt or indignation which comes from rightly or wrongly held feelings of being injured or offended.</p>	<p>FEAR</p> <p>Feelings of anxiety, agitation, uneasiness, apprehension, etc.</p>	<p>HARMS OR HURT</p> <p>Wrong acts which result in pain, hurt feelings, worry, financial loss, etc., for others and also self.</p>

I always suggest to the people whom I sponsor that they read the *Twelve & Twelve* regarding the Basic Instincts of Life. This is to get a working knowledge about the words there and look them up in the dictionary because they are very important words that we are going to use later in the third column when we get ready to do our Fourth Step inventory.

There have always been a lot of questions as to why Bill wrote the *Twelve & Twelve*. One reason I think he wrote the *Twelve & Twelve* is that he had so much trouble selling “The Traditions” to the groups and he felt if he could put the Twelve Traditions with the Steps in a book then it would be more acceptable to the groups. But I think one of the main reasons he wrote the *Twelve & Twelve* was that thirteen years later Bill knew more about what he was talking about. Let's face it, when Bill wrote *The Big Book* and finished it up in 1939, Bill was not a spiritual giant. He was not trained in those areas at all. Bill was not trained in human nature; he studied economics and business and he was a night school lawyer.

Yet, Bill was able to write one of the most spiritual books dealing with human nature the world's ever seen, even though he didn't know much about it. Surely God had a hand in the writing of *The Big Book*! Thirteen years later though, Bill had worked with many alcoholics. He had worked with and studied with some of the best minds in the world regarding spirituality and human nature and I think he felt he had more information that he could pass on to us that would make it easier to work the Steps according to *The Big Book*, of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Bill says in the *Twelve & Twelve* that the book is a series of essays that are designed to give us more information so we can better work the Steps. He also says the *Twelve & Twelve* is **not** designed to replace *The Big Book*. *The Big Book* has always been the basic text and always will be. You simply cannot work the program out of the *Twelve & Twelve*. Lots of people try, but they can't do it because there are no directions on how to work the Steps. Frankly, I think that's why they love the *Twelve & Twelve*. They can get in it and dance around and philosophize and they never have to do anything except talk. There is, however, some information in there that is absolutely invaluable. If we can see it, understand it and accept it, it makes working the steps out of *The Big Book* much simpler and much easier. Bill taught me more in *The Big Book* in two or three pages than I had learned in some 40 years of living.

Let's take a closer look at the Basic Instincts of Life, of what they are and how they affect us and those around us. For years while reading about “the actor” who wants to run the whole show on page 61 in *The Big Book*, I never really understood what Bill was talking about until I got into the *Twelve & Twelve* and read the information concerning the Basic Instincts of Life. Let's look at them for just a moment. **(See Chart “Basic Instincts of Life” page 67)**

All human beings are born with three basic instincts of life.

1. They are God given
2. They are absolutely necessary for survival of the human race
3. Therefore they are good things

The first thing he talked about is the **social instinct**. Bill said, “All human beings are born with the desire to be liked, to be accepted, and to be respected by other people and that we are born with the desire to come together in groups with other people.” If we didn't have

those desires and cared nothing for each other, the world would go into complete anarchy; a “dog-eat-dog” situation would reign and eventually under those conditions the human race would fail to survive.

Bill used several terms describing the **social instinct**:

- **Companionship:** wanting to belong or to be accepted. So many of us grew up on the outside of the crowd looking in, wanting to be and knew we could not be.
- **Prestige:** wanting to be recognized or to be accepted as the leader of the group. The world needs leaders. Somebody’s got to do that. Most people will take one of two directions; either to be a part of or to be a leader of a group. In either case it’s based upon what other people think of us.
- **Self-esteem:** what we think of ourselves. That’s usually high or low based upon what others think of us or what we think other people think of us. If they seem to like us and accept us we feel pretty good towards ourselves. If it feels like they reject us and they don’t want us, then we feel pretty lousy towards ourselves.
- **Pride:** is an excessive and unjustified opinion of one’s self. We either think too well of ourselves or too little of ourselves. In either case it’s not the truth. (I’m glad I got into the habit of going to the dictionary. I always thought pride was something you ought to have. All I ever wanted to be as a young boy growing up was to be a man who walked tall with pride and just a little bit sideways like John Wayne did!)
- **Personal Relationships:** our relations with other human beings and the world around us
- **Ambitions:** our plans for the future.

All human beings have these things. Now if I want to be liked and accepted and respected by the world and the people in it, the first thing I’ve got to do is determine, “What do they want from me?”

It varies throughout the world. In one part it’s a good education, in another it’s to be large landowner, and yet in another part of the world it’s to have a large family. Society teaches us those things as we grow up and we set goals for ourselves as to what we want to become in the future. To reach these goals we have set we are going to have to work at it. You can’t just be a bum and sit on your duff and be successful and people like you and accept you. You are going to have to work at whatever it might be.

By the same token we’re going to have to make some sacrifices. There are some things that I would really like to do as a human being that are very pleasurable and very exciting but if you catch me at it you’re not going to like me at all. I don’t think you and I would do the work needed to reach the goal or make the sacrifices necessary unless we get a reward for doing so. And the great reward? Well Bill said it in his story when he said, “***I had arrived.***”

How many of us have done it? We set our goal and we just worked our tails off for years. The day we reach the goal, they pat us on the back and say “You’re a fine fellow”, “You’re a good man”, and “You are doing great”. There’s a feeling that comes over us which is one of

those indescribably wonderful feelings. The only thing wrong is it seems to be just a temporary feeling. No sooner do we reach the goal, get the praise, the recognition and the prestige from it, we look around we say "Is this all there is to it?" So we set another goal, and we work and work, and we strive and strive, and we sacrifice and we reach the new goal, and we get the praise and recognition, feels great, doesn't last long, and we set another goal. It seems to create within we human beings an insatiable desire for more and more power, more and more recognition and we're not getting it fast enough or they're not giving it to us the way we think they ought to, so what do we do about it? Well we start taking shortcuts. We start doing a little lying, a little conning, a little manipulating, a little stepping on other peoples toes and climbing on their backs and the instant we do so we create pain and suffering for others. They in turn retaliate against us and create pain and suffering for us.

It's plain to see, that a life run on self-will could hardly ever be a success. Under those conditions we will always be in collision with people, places, and things.

The second basic instinct he talked about is the **security instinct**. Now, I know that in AA we try to live one day at a time. But I also know that just about everybody in this room has got an insurance policy. The purpose of the insurance policy is to protect ourselves in the future. Bill said, "All human beings are born with the desire to be secure in the future. If we didn't have that desire we wouldn't provide the food, the clothing, the shelter, and the things that we need to survive. Then next winter we would just simply freeze to death or the next drought season we would starve to death. So this desire that we have to be secure in the future is God-given and it is necessary for our survival." Now once again if you're going to be secure in the future you have to decide "Well, what is it that I need in order to be secure?"

Society usually teaches us those things as we grow up and it varies throughout the world. In one part of the world you only need \$4, in another you need \$4,000, in another you need \$4,000,000 and in another part of the world maybe you need 198 coconuts, or whatever it is that they use to measure, trade, and barter. Based on what we're taught, we set goals for ourselves and we begin to work at it. Now to be secure in the future you can't just sit on your duff and be a bum. You're going to have to work. You're going to have to make some money. You're going to have to invest.

At the same time you've got to sacrifice. Hell, we can't blow it all today and be secure tomorrow. Again, I don't think you and I would do the work necessary to reach the goal or make the sacrifices necessary if we didn't get a reward for it.

Once again the reward is that great feeling that comes at the moment of successful completion of the goal. How many of us have done it? We set the goal for the new dress, for the new shoes, for the new suit, for the new drapes, for the new couch, for the new home, for the new car, for the new piece of property, for the new business, and we work and we work and we strive and we strive for the day that sucker is paid off and nobody can take it away from us. What a great and wonderful feeling that is. How great that was. The only thing wrong with it is that it's just a temporary feeling. No sooner had I gotten that sucker paid off I looked around and his house is bigger than mine; he has a Cadillac and I'm driving a Chevrolet; he's got a Brooks Brothers suit and I bought mine at Kmart. That causes us to set another goal. And we work and we work and we strive and we strive and we reach the new goal, feels good, doesn't last long, we set another. It seems to create an insatiable desire for more and more and more and more yet we're not getting it fast enough. They're not giving it

to us like we think they should. So what do we do? We take shortcuts. We lie, we cheat, we con, we manipulate, and the instant we do we hurt other people. They retaliate against us, creating pain and suffering for us.

It's plain to see that a life run on self-will can hardly ever be a success.

The third basic instinct he talks about is the **sex instinct**. Bill said "All human beings are born with the desire to have sex." Now, it may get turned off by bad teachings or bad happenings but he said "All human beings are born with the desire to have sex because if we don't have sex we can't reproduce ourselves, and if we don't reproduce ourselves, sooner or later the human race is going to fail to survive."

So just like the other two basic instincts, if you're going to reproduce yourself through the sexual act you're going to have to work at it. Hell, you can do more work in three minutes of sex, (if you can last that long), than you'll do all day digging a ditch! Don't you older fellows remember how it used to be when we got through with it? My God you'd just fall over sideways, the sweat is just pouring off of you, and you can hardly get your breath. You feel like you've died, gone to heaven and come back two or three times. But I don't think you and I would do that kind of work if we didn't get a reward for doing so. The great reward is that great feeling we get both physically and emotionally at the moment of the successful completion of the sex act. It's one of the greatest rewards that a human being can experience. But, just like the other two it seems to be just a temporary feeling. Hell, you no sooner get through doing it that you get to thinking about doing it again; it's such a pleasurable and exciting thing that the next thing you know you get to thinking about and doing it in different ways. Then you get to thinking about doing it in different positions. Then you get to thinking about doing it with different people. The next thing you know we're doing it at the wrong time in the wrong way with the wrong people and the instant we do so we create pain and suffering for others. They in turn retaliate against us, which creates pain and suffering for us.

It's plain to see, that a life run on self-will can hardly ever be a success.

The fulfillment of these basic instincts is so pleasurable, that all human beings from time to time will overdo it in one or more of these areas and create pain and suffering for others.

You'll notice on that little chart there's an object called '**SELF**'. That's where **self-will** comes from. It comes from these three basic instincts of life. You'll also notice coming out of the '**self**' object there is another called '**wrongs**', which is another word we need to look at. Somewhere we got the idea that wrongs meant a list of dirty filthy nasty items. But if you go to the dictionary and look it up you'll find several definitions:

- Wrong - incorrect judgment of other people = **resentment**
- Wrong - incorrect believing = **fear**
- Wrong - are the **harms and hurts** that we do to other people

Now it's easy to spot a selfish, self-centered human being, the one who is running on self-will, not running on God's Will. A selfish, self-centered human being is always madder than hell.

Damn him; Damn her. By God I'll show them. They're not going to treat me that way. A selfish, self-centered human being is always scared to death. They can't depend on God. They can't depend on other people. If we're an alcoholic reaching the end of the road we can't depend on ourselves any longer and we're running absolutely scared to death all the time. A selfish, self-centered human being, in order to fulfill the basic instincts of life, is always overdoing it and creating harms and hurts for others. Then we've got to be scared to death of what they're going to do when they catch us; even if they don't catch us. If God dwells within each of us, we know the difference between right and wrong. The guilt and remorse associated with those things begin to eat us up.

A person whose mind is filled with resentment, a person whose mind is filled with fear, a person whose mind is filled with guilt and remorse, does not feel good. Eventually searching for a way to feel better we begin to think about the sense of ease and comfort that comes at once by taking a couple of drinks. Next thing you know we believe we can drink and we end up drunk all over again. So at the very least we're going to have to do something about this selfish, self-centered human being and it seems the only way you can do anything about that is with God's help because God made self-will and only God has the power to overcome that. At the very least, we have to do something about these resentments, these fears and this guilt and remorse in order to find the peace of mind, serenity and happiness for good long term sobriety.

If every human being in the world today could fulfill these three basic instincts at the level that God intends there would be no conflict on earth today. But all human beings have self-will and from time to time will overdo it in one or more areas, creating conflict for others and for themselves.

I never knew that. I just knew I was always in trouble. I just knew I was always madder than hell. I just knew I was always scared to death. I knew guilt and remorse was eating me up but I didn't know where it came from. You see, they gave me the rules but they never taught me how to *play the game*. A.A. has taught me how to play the game and now that I know how I don't break the rules anymore and I don't hurt other people and I'm not scared to death and I'm not filled with guilt and remorse. This is the best information I have ever seen on what makes me tick and what causes me to do the things I do.