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SESSION 8

STEP 4 How It Works Resentment Grudge List

Step 4: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

The 1ST and 2ND working of the grudge list.

If we were to live, we had to be free of anger. (66: 2)

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY- What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read Chapter 5, How It Works. (8 paragraphs, pp. 64-66) Many will read Step 4 in the *12&12* as well. Watch out for paralysis from fear or perfectionism.
 - We come here with a huge load of stored up shame, guilt, and unresolved pain to be let go of. Step 4 helps us lay bare the conflicts of the past so that we are no longer at their mercy.
 - Step 4 gives us the means to find out who we are, and what we are not. It is about finding our assets as well as our defects of character. We discover that our problems began long before we took our first drink. We may have felt isolated and afraid, and it was our desire to change the way we felt that led to our drinking.
 - We have a disease. We are not responsible for being an alcoholic, any more than a diabetic is responsible for being diabetic. But now that we know we are an alcoholic, we are responsible for our recovery. There are no longer excuses, because we realize we must live the Steps daily or we will die spiritually, emotionally and physically. We are working on practices - things we do - that we will use every day of our lives to move us from being restless, irritable and discontented toward keeping us sober and having serenity and peace of mind.

- **WRITE** Do Step 4 as best you reasonably can, and that is more than good enough.

Start writing your grudge lists, one list at a time. Put down all the people, places, and things **who** you resent on a list. Then list a few notes about **how** you *were hurt or threatened* (65: 0), or where you had expectations of others, or others had expectations of you – where you were *sore* or were *'burned up.'* (65: 0). And then list **what** part of your self was affected.

[Resentment: (L -to re-feel.) Indignantly to feel old injuries over and over again.]
[Anger: (ON -grief.) To rage.] [Grudge: (OF -to murmur.) Ill-will.]

- **TALK** Call your sponsor and other members of the group. If there were abuse issues, the task is to not deny them, and to seek outside counseling help.
- **PRACTICE DAILY MEDITATION / PRAYER** Call on a higher power.

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II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE- What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of Step 4?

Share about experiences with resentments and how working the Steps worked on them.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider pp. 64: 0-66: 2) Try reading these out loud.

List assets and liabilities as to which behaviors and thought-habits work, and which do not work, to give serenity and peace of mind in life. See page 34 this workbook.

A. The 1ST Working of the Grudge List: Who? How? What? Begin with centering silence. Ask for help. *In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper.* (64: 3)

- List all the people, institutions, or principles you resent. Tip: Carry a list with you and write down details about every time you are restless, irritated, and discontent, every time you are annoyed, angry, or have expectations, etc.
- Try the *example* of the *Mr. Brown* multi-column chart on BB page 65.

Grudge List from this example (65: 2)

<i>I'm resentful at:</i> Who? (People, Places, Things, Institutions, Principles, etc.)	<i>The Cause:</i> How? How they hurt or threatened me.	<i>Affects my:</i> What? What part of self affected that I reacted to.

- Fill in only the first column for now.
- Make the chart as large or as small as you see fit.

1.) Who? The First Column: “Who hurt or threatened me?” (65: 0) *I'm resentful at...* (65: 2)

- In the first column, the *grudge list* (65: 1), we listed [names of] *people, institutions, or principles with whom we were angry.* (64: 3)
- List 100 or 300 or 1000 names of people (parents, spouse, co-workers, the people in traffic or the checkout line, etc.), institutions (jail, IRS, etc.), or principles (‘You reap what you sow.’ ‘Our troubles are of our own making,’ etc.) about which you have resentments.

Grudge List

Who? (People, Places, Things, Institutions, Principles, etc.)
<i>...example... (65: 2)</i> <i>Mr. Brown</i> <i>Mrs. Jones</i> <i>My employer</i> <i>My wife</i>

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2.) How? The Second Column: “How did they hurt or threaten me?” (65: 2) After you have made the list of all the people, institutions, and principles that you resent, one at a time you are ready to begin to fill in the second column. You might consider selecting a few representative “grudges” to work on now, reserving the option to eventually work through all of them.

- *We asked ourselves why we were angry.* (64: 3)
- *We set opposite each name our injuries.* (65: 1)

Grudge List

Who? (People, Places, Things, Institutions, Principles, etc.)	How? How they hurt or threatened me.
<i>...example... (65: 2) Mr. Brown</i>	<i>His attention to my wife. Told my wife of my mistress. Brown may get my job.</i>

Now that you have made a list of everything the people, places, institutions, principles, etc. on your list did to cause your resentment, you are ready to proceed to the Third Column. You list what part of yourself was affected by the actions of the person, place, institution, or principle that you resent.

3.) What? The Third Column: “What part of my Self did they hurt or threaten?”
In most cases it was found that our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions, our personal relationships (including sex) were hurt or threatened. (64: 3-65: 0)

- *Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal, or sex relations, which had been interfered with?* (65: 1)
- Opposite each selected name, and every *cause* (65: 2) listed, one at a time succinctly write down in the third column what part of your self, or your instincts, or your actor’s role, was affected. [See: *Each person is like an actor....* (60: 4)]
- [Heard in a meeting: “We list the three ‘S’s’ of the instinct of Self:
 - a.) Security instinct – material and emotional;
 - b.) Self-esteem instinct – fear for our very existence
 - c.) Sex instinct – relationship, companionship.”]
- Our resentments are part of our reaction to these perceived threats.

Grudge List

Who? (People, Places, Things, Institutions, Principles, etc.)	How? How they hurt or threatened me.	What? What part of self affected that I reacted to.
<i>...example... (65: 2) Mr. Brown</i>	<i>Brown may get my job.</i>	<i>Security Self-esteem (fear)</i>

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B. The 2ND Working of the Grudge List: Why? “Why must I change?”

When we were finished we considered it [list] carefully. (65: 3) Begin with silence.

1.) Resentments build us up to a drink.

- *To conclude that others were wrong was as far as most of us ever got.*(66: 0)
- *Sometimes it was remorse and then we were sore at ourselves.* (66: 0) [ie: self pity. See *He becomes angry, indignant, self-pitying.* (61: 1)]
- *It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness.* (66: 1)
- *To the ...extent that we permit these [resentments],...we squander the hours.*(66: 1) *But with the alcoholic, whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of resentment is infinitely grave.* (66: 1)
- *For when harboring such feelings we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit.* (66: 1)

2.) If we drink, we die.

- *We found that it is fatal.* (66: 1)
- *The insanity of alcohol returns and we drink again.* (66: 1)
- *And with us, to drink is to die.* (66: 1)

3.) To live and be free of anger.

- *If we were to live, we had to be free of anger.* (66: 2)
- *For alcoholics these things are poison.* (66: 2)

C. What might we learn from the 1ST and 2ND working of the list?

1ST ...Set them on paper. (64: 3) **Who? How? What?** We learned from the First Column of our grudge list that our anger and resentment at **who** hurt us or did not meet our expectations really does occupy our mind and controls us, and blocks us from the Spirit.

- We learned from the Second Column that it is not who the people, institutions, or principles are that make us angry and resentful; it is **how** they hurt or threatened us. It is not so much who they are but how they ACT. We may begin forgiving ourselves for our own actions and behaviors, and others for their actions, right here.
- We learned from the Third Column that it is not who or even how they hurt us, but the way we have habitually chosen to REACT to **what** they threaten in us which determines whether we are upset or not.
- We react by habit.

2ND ...Considered it carefully. (65: 3) **Why?** “Why must I change?” Our present resentment habits lead to self pity, are a waste of time and, if we do not change, we may drink and die. Our own thought-habits lead us to drink.

- Now we know why we must change. We go to the 3RD and 4TH working of the grudge list in Session 9, **when** we are ready, to see **where** we were responsible.

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SESSION 9

STEP 4 How It Works Resentment ‘Turnarounds’

The 3RD and 4TH working of the grudge list.

They, like ourselves, were sick too. (67:0)

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did Big Book authors say?

- **READ** Read of Step 4 Resentments in the Big Book (the final 4 paragraphs, pp. 66-67)
 - **Turn Back** In Session 9 we *turn...back* (see 66: 3) to the list and do the 3RD and 4TH workings of our resentment inventory.
 - **Turnarounds** ‘Turnarounds’ is a term used by some in AA to indicate the beneficial *huge emotional displacements and rearrangements* (27: 4) that happen to us as we work through the Big Book Step 4 process. Our Step 4 turnaround is returning us to our proper orientation, back from our isolation. We are given tools to do this through a close and inquiring reading of Step 4 in the Big Book.
- **WRITE** Write about one or more resentments or about your reflections on the readings. Heard in a meeting: “An expectation is a resentment waiting to happen.”
- **TALK** Call your sponsor and other members of the group.
- **PRACTICE DAILY MEDITATION / PRAYER** Ask for help.

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of my resentment inventory?

Continue your discussions with the group about your resentments and how you are working the Steps in order to address them.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider pp. 66: 3-67: 2) Cross off the bulleted points.

A. The 3RD Working of the Grudge List: When? “When I am ready, what do I do?” *Turned back to the list* (66: 3) Begin with centering silence.

1.) A Different Angle – Three Column Lessons

- *We turned back to the list, for it held the key to the future. (66: 3)*
- *We were prepared to look at it from an entirely different angle. (66: 3)*
- *We began to see that the world and its people really dominated us. (66: 3)* [First Column lesson- “There is no room for contact with my higher power.”]

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- *In that state, the wrong-doing of others, fancied or real...* [Second Column lesson- "It was not who, but how they hurt me that I'm mad at."]
 - *had power to actually kill.* (66: 3) [Third Column lesson- "I react and drink."]
- 2.) **How Could We Escape?** (66: 3) Empathy – They are like us.
- *This was our course: We realized that the people who wronged us* [First Column names -**who** hurt us] *were perhaps spiritually sick.* (66: 4)
 - *Though we did not like their symptoms...*[Second Column –**how** they hurt us]
 - *...and the way these disturbed us,...* [Third Column –**what** part of self we reacted to]
 - *they, like ourselves, were sick too.* (67:0)
- 3.) **Meditation / Prayer * Avoid retaliation.**
- *We asked God* [of our understanding] *to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend.* (67: 0)
 - *We avoid retaliation or argument.* (67: 1)

B. The 4TH Working of the Grudge List: Where? "Where am I responsible?" "Can I describe my part?"

Referring to our list again. (67: 2) Meditation / prayer to ask for help.

1.) Our Own Mistakes

Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. (67: 2) [Mistake: A wrong action. Error; not right; blunder; out of bounds; missing the mark; defect; shortcoming.]

2.) Our Motives – More writing in more columns.

- *Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened?* (67: 2)
 - These *motives* (86: 2) were the terms used by early AA's as mirror-images of the "Four Absolutes" of the Oxford Group: "Absolute Selflessness," "Absolute Honesty," "Absolute Purity," and "Absolute Love."
 - Afraid of getting drunk trying to be absolutely too good too soon, the Big Book authors tried rather to be less selfish, less dishonest, less self-seeking, and less fearful. Consequently they found they were less likely to take a drink and less likely to live on an emotional dry bender.
- Opposite each Third Column instinct or role that was threatened and that you reacted to, write down and share precisely and in detail what your motives were.
- Try to keep your written responses concise with specific examples. Avoid generalities. Expand upon "I lied," or "I was dishonest," by telling what happened: "I promised to be there and never showed up."

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- a.) Selfishness** Concern for self regardless of others.
- Selfishness: ego = me. Self-absorption: "It's all about me!" Regard for our own interest or happiness to the disregard of the well-being of others. Not aware of others and their needs. Instinctively putting our own needs first. A false sense of a separate self, etc.
 - Habitual selfishness: We could not see others' or our real place in the universe. [*Our total inability to form a true partnership with another human being. 12&12, 53: 1*]
 - 'Turnaround': We begin to see that we can change to our true nature – so that ultimately the best care of ourselves lies in our unselfish regard for the concern of the whole, that care for others includes us as well. Care of our selves becomes care of our soul, and is known to be care of all.
- b.) Dishonesty** A tendency to deceive, to conceal our true character.
- Dishonest: Fraudulent, not what purported. The reverse of honesty; lack of probity or integrity; disposition to deceive, defraud, or steal; thievishness; theft, fraud. Not corresponding to fact. Trying to be people pleasers in order to gain approval from other people. Believing the lies our mind tells us, etc.
 - Habitual dishonesty: We lost perspective. We often did not even know we were lying because we had a false way of seeing reality.
 - 'Turnaround': We begin to see that we can change to our true nature – to be who we truly are, free from concealment, to be a sincere person acting in direct, frank, open ways. We are good and caring people.
- c.) Self-seeking, inconsiderate** Concern for self over (or under) others.
- Self-seeking: The seeking after our own welfare before that of others, prosecution of selfish ends. To put ourselves either above or below others. Seeing ourselves as better or worse than others. Lacking perspective, etc.
 - Inconsiderate: Thoughtless, negligent, rash, incautious, heedless.
 - Habitual self-seeking: As a matter of course we tended to put our needs first, including our needs to be first, to be last, to be liked, to be feared, and to be pitied. [*Top of the heap, or to hide underneath it. 12&12, 53: 1*]
 - 'Turnaround': We begin to see that we can change from self-seeking to our true nature – to be thoughtful and considerate and in partnership with others and to act with loving compassion toward ourselves and others.
- d.) Fear** Dread. *Self-reliance failed us.* (68: 1)
- Fear: To feel alarmed or uneasy. The emotion of pain or uneasiness caused by the sense of impending danger. Apprehension of some future evil. [*Fear that we would lose something we already possessed or would fail to get something we wanted. 12&12, 76: 2*], or be found out for who we are. To lose heart, etc.
 - Habitual fear: Our apprehension of impending danger, our anxiety, was the existential basis for our selfishness, our dishonesty and self-seeking and our drinking.
 - 'Turnaround': We begin to see that we can change to our true nature – to be free of alarm and apprehension, free of being restless, irritable and

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discontented, and to embrace a feeling of goodwill toward all creation. We can act with loving compassion.

- [Heard in a meeting: “Fear is to lose heart. Courage is to take heart. Love is to open one's heart. Trust is to rely on heart. Faith is trust in heart.”]

3.) Our Faults

a.) The Inventory is ours.

- *Though a situation had not been entirely our fault*
- *we tried to disregard the other person involved entirely. (67: 2)*
- *Where were we to blame? (67: 2) Did you step on their toes? (See 62: 1) [Blame: Responsibility for fault or error, or being not right. Blundering; out of bounds; missing the mark; defects, shortcomings.]*
- Were your reactions out of bounds?
- *The inventory was ours, not the other man's. (67: 2)*

b.) List our faults.

- *When we saw our faults, we listed them. (67: 2) [Fault: A seismic gap; a conflict between deeply held values; or instincts in collision, ie: We want to help others, but also we want our own way. Out of bounds; missing the mark; shortcomings.]*
- *We placed them before us in black and white. (67: 2) Write them down.*
- Disregarding everyone and everything else involved, look at each angry reaction situation and see what, if anything, you did to cause each event, or to make it worse, or to react to it and hence create more troubles for yourself or others.
- *We admitted our wrongs honestly (67: 2) [Wrong: Twisted way of thinking and acting. Error; not right; blunder; out of bounds; missing the mark; shortcomings.]*

C. Our Turnarounds by four workings of the Grudge List. Willing?

“Am I willing to set it straight?”

1.) **Willing.** *And were willing to set these matters straight. (67: 2) [Straight: Not crooked. Honest; by the rules; right; in bounds. Selfless, honest, loving, pure motives.]*

2.) **Turnarounds** In order to save our own lives, we are turning from our habitual point of view. *We stood at the turning point. (59: 1) Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them. (27:4) We become willing to do things differently. We are willing to change. We turn around.*

3.) * **Meditate / Pray** We meditate / pray for the benefit of all. Many in AA use such a composite prayer on behalf of others and for themselves.

[Optional: God of my understanding, bless _____ (including myself), for she/he is a sick person, and but by your grace, there go I. I pray for their health, happiness and prosperity. I pray I may show them the patience, kindness and love I would want to be shown or that I would show a sick friend. God save me from being hurt, threatened, insulted, or angry. How may I help them? May thy will, not mine, be done. (See 67: 0; 552: 1)]

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STEP 4 Resentment Grudge List (65: 1) Inventory Forms

Make multiple copies or expand these templates into your own notebook.

Who? "Who hurt or threatened me?" *I'm resentful at...* (65: 2)

Work down the list from top to bottom, just writing the names at this time. Ignore the Second and Third columns for now. Use multiple pages.

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- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Person | 18. |
| Institution | |
| Principle I resent | 19. |
| 1. | 20. |
| 2. | 21. |
| 3. | 22. |
| 4. | 23. |
| 5. | 24. |
| 6. | 25. |
| 7. | 26. |
| 8. | 27. |
| 9. | 28. |
| 10. | 29. |
| 11. | 30. |
| 12. | 31. |
| 13. | 32. |
| 14. | 33. |
| 15. | 34. |
| 16. | 35. |
| 17. | 36. |
| | Etc., etc. |

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Step 4- Resentment- Fill in Second and Third Columns

Make multiple copies or expand these templates into your own notebook.

1. Who? First Column name: *I'm Resentful At...* (65: 2)

“Who hurt or threatened or interfered with me?” Inventory one name at a time.

2. How? Second Column: *The Cause...* (65: 2)

“How did they hurt or threaten or interfere with me?”

Opposite each selected name we write down in four or five words how they hurt us that caused our anger and resentment. We write just in this second column for now.

3. What? Third Column: *Affects My...* (65: 2)

“What part of my Self did they hurt or threaten and that I reacted to?”

Opposite each selected name, and every *cause* listed, we succinctly write down in the third column what part of self (security, self-esteem, sex or relationships, etc.), or instinct (64: 3-65: 1), or actor’s role or character (60: 4) was hurt or threatened or in play. Our resentments are part of our reaction to this perceived threat.

1. First Column: <i>I'm resentful at:</i> Who? Who resent?	2. Second Column: <i>The cause:</i> How? The cause?	3. Third Column: <i>Affects my:</i> What? Part of self?

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STEP 4 Resentment Turnarounds

For every item in the Third Column we ask, “**Where** am I responsible?”

Make multiple copies or expand in your notebook.

For every Third Column situation or event, and reaction, fill in resentment ‘turnarounds.’
“Where am I responsible?” We write down and share precisely and in detail what our motives were.

- *Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, [Second Column] we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. (67: 2)*
- *Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened? (67: 2)*

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Where was I selfish? (67: 2) [Concern for self regardless of others. Self-absorbed.]

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Where was I dishonest? (67: 2) [A tendency to deceit, conceal our true character, lack perspective. We believed our own lies.]

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Where was I self-seeking (67: 2) or inconsiderate? (69: 1) [Concern for self over – or under – others.]

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Where was I frightened? (67: 2) [Habitual anxiety: Afraid of losing something we have, not getting something we want, or of being found out for who we are.]

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Write our faults. *The inventory was ours, not the other man's.* (67: 2) *When we saw our faults we listed them. We placed them [faults] before us in black and white.* (67: 2)

Where was I at fault? (67: 2) [A seismic gap between our own and others' deeply held values or our own instincts in collision. Out of bounds? Miss the mark?]

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(Why do we act this way? Because....see p. 338)

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Willing to set matters straight. *Were willing to set these matters straight.* (67: 2)

Step 4 Resentment Turnaround Meditation / Prayer.

[Optional: God bless _____ (including myself), for they are a sick person, and but by your grace, there go I. I pray for their health, happiness, and prosperity. I pray I may show them the patience, tolerance, kindness and love I would want to be shown or that I would show a sick friend. God save me from being hurt, threatened, insulted or angry. How may I help them? May thy will, not mine be done. (See 67: 0; 552: 1)]