

## Step 8 “We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.”

“Steps Eight and Nine are concerned with personal relationships.” (1<sup>st</sup> sentence, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph Pg 77)

### Objective(s):

1. “...we consider how, with our newfound knowledge of ourselves, we may develop the best possible relations with every human being we know.” (1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, Pg 77)
2. “Learning how to live in the greatest peace, partnership, and brotherhood with all men and women...” (2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, Pg 77)

### HOW?

1. “First, we take a look backwards and try to discover where we have been at fault;”
  - a. “Every AA has found that he can make little headway in this new adventure of living until (we) first backtracks and really makes an accurate and unsparing survey of the human wreckage (we) have left in (our) wake.” (2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, Pg 77)
  - b. “To a degree, (we) have already done this when taking moral inventory, but now the time has come when (we) ought to redouble (our) efforts to see how many people (we) have hurt, and in what ways. (2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, Pg 77)

### We begin Step 8 with our Step 4

2. “we make a vigorous attempt to repair the damage we have done;” (Step 9 action)
3. “and third, having thus cleaned away the debris of the past, we consider how, with our newfound knowledge of ourselves, we may develop the best possible relations with every human being we know.” (What?) (Pg 77, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph)
  - c. “This is a very large order. It is a task which we may perform with increasing skill, but never really finish.” (BB Ch 5: “Progress not perfection” “What an order...”) (2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, 77)

### Obstacles:

1. “The First, and one of the most difficult, has to do with forgiveness.” (1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, Pg 78)
  - a. “If we are now about to ask forgiveness for ourselves, why shouldn’t we start out by forgiving them, one and all?” (Pg 78 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph)
  - b. “meanwhile forgiving the wrongs done us, real or fancied.” (Pg 82) **Echo of Step 4 in BB Pg 66**
2. “We got a pretty severe shock when we realized we were preparing to make face-to-face admission of our wretched conduct to those we had hurt.” (3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, Pg 78)
3. “...others were happily unaware of being hurt.”
4. “...purposeful forgetting.” (3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, Pg 79)
- 5.

“Since defective relations with other human beings have nearly always been the immediate cause of our woes, including our alcoholism, no field of investigation could yield more satisfying and valuable rewards than this one.” (1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, Pg 80)      What did you drink at, who did you drink at?

(Step 4 also references the cause of our alcoholism... “that his character defects, representing instincts gone astray, have been the primary cause of his drinking...”) (Pg 50, paragraph 1)

**Note:** BB seems to combine 8 and 9, whereas 12 x 12 clearly separates them.

Step 8: backtrack, reflection, consideration, review, add to list.

Step 9: another list of 4 columns and action in amends.

### **Harms:**

“To define the word ‘harm’ in a practical way, we might call it the result of instincts in collision, which cause physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual damage to people.” (Pg 80 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph)

Bad temper	Lie	Cheat	Selfish	Miserly	Irresponsible
Callous Cold	Irritable	Critical	Impatient	Humorless	
Neglect	Dominating	Depression	Self-Pity	Etc.,	(Pg 80-81)

Add to our list...

### **Promises of Step 8:**

1. “Learn how to live in the greatest peace, partnership and brotherhood with all men and women.” (Pg 77)
2. “a moving and fascinating adventure.” (Pg 77)
3. “the great advantages of doing this will so quickly reveal themselves that the pain will be lessened as one obstacle after another, melts away.” (Pg 78)
4. “no field of investigation could yield more satisfying and valuable rewards than this one.” (Pg 80)
5. “Thoroughness, we have found, will pay-and pay handsomely.” (Pg 80)
6. “It is the beginning of the end of our isolation from our fellows and from God.” (Pg 82, last sentence)

*Step 9: "Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."*

"**GOOD** judgement, a careful sense of timing, courage, and prudence – these are the qualities we need when we take Step 9. (1<sup>st</sup> sentence of first paragraph, Pg 83)

Qualities:

1. "**GOOD** judgement": (Note "**GOOD**" is capitalized and in bold.) Considering the consequences of one's decision(s), thinking before acting.
2. "a careful sense of timing": Making sure of avoiding potential damage, mishap or harm. Intuitive.
3. "courage": The ability to do something that frightens one.
4. "prudence": The ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason; Cautious or circumspect as to the danger or risk.

Dividing our list into 4 columns: (Pg 83, paragraph 2)

1. "There are those who ought to be dealt with just as soon as we become reasonably confident that we can maintain our sobriety."
2. "There will be those to whom we can make only partial restitution, lest complete disclosures do them or others more harm than good."
3. "There will be other cases where action ought to be deferred."
4. "and still others in which by the very nature of the situation we shall never be able to make direct personal contact at all."

And the final list...

Yes                      Maybe                      No Never

"Most of us begin making certain kinds of direct amends from the day we join Alcoholics Anonymous." (Pg 8, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph)

Obstacles:

Fear, pride, humiliation, procrastination, evasion (Pg 85)

Exception (Qualifier):

1. "...except when to do so would injure them or others."
2. "The only exceptions we will make will be cases where our disclosure would cause actual harm."
3. "There can only be one consideration which should qualify our desire for a complete disclosure of the damage we have done. That will arise in the occasional situation where to make a full revelation would seriously harm the one to whom we are making amends. Or – quite as important – other people." (Pg 86)

Step 9 Promises