

Surrender School Step Study

Work the steps using a “Study Guide for Overeaters”
Step 5, 6, and 7 – [Pages 42 - 46](#) and Video [Session G](#)
Big Book [“Into Action,”](#) pages 72 to middle 76

SET ASIDE PRAYER

God, please set aside everything I think I know about myself, my emotional sobriety, the 12 Steps and You; for an open mind and a new experience of myself, my emotional sobriety, the 12 Steps and especially You!

LINK:

<https://surrenderschool.org/wt-s-usingastudyguide/>

Password: **Surrender2023!**



- Read the [Study Guide, \(Steps Five, Six, and Seven\)](#), pages 42-46
- Optional Homework:
 1. Watch the [video of Steps 5, 6, 7 Session G: Homework](#) and [view the slide show](#).
 2. Read: *Big Book "Into Action,"* pages 72 to middle 76
 3. Listen to these *OA Podcasts/videos on Step Five*.
 - [Step 5:](#) by Janet B. from *A Design for living*
 - [Step Five:](#) from Overeaters Anonymous: "The Importance of Working All Twelve Steps" podcast series
 4. Listen to these *OA Podcasts/videos on Step Six*.
 - [Into Action: Step 6](#) by Sam S. from *Choose your Own Conception: OA Big Book Study*
 - [Step 6](#) from Overeaters Anonymous: "The Importance of Working All Twelve Steps" podcast series
 5. Listen to these *OA Podcasts on Step Six and Step Seven*
 - [Steps 6 & 7](#) by Pete B. from *A Design for Living*
- Watch the [video for Session G](#)

Steps One, Two, and Three:

In Step One we found complete despair—powerlessness. We cannot solve the problem of our compulsive eating [addictive eating] by ourselves.

[Video Link: 34:38](#)
Step 1

In Step Two we will find hope—power. A power greater than ourselves will restore us to sanity.

[Link to 16:44 - 17:59](#)
Step 2

Step One is the problem. Step Two is the solution.

Step Three is merely a decision to do the rest of the steps:

[Link to Video: 6:31 - 7:48](#)
Step 3

If you are willing to try to find a Higher Power through the steps (Step Two), then you have to make a **decision** to work the steps. And that really is all **Step Three is—a decision.**

Step Four – [Pages 25-36](#) and Video [Session E](#)
Big Book “*How It Works*” – [Pages 63-67](#)

Overview:

Let’s start with the overview. The Big Book suggests that in Step Three we were “**convinced that self, manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us**” (page 64). ***The Big Book has three aspects of self that it wants us to look at.***

The first is resentments, and we’ll deal with them in this and the next chapter. We will find, I think, that a resentment is, in its broadest sense, the concept that “**the past didn’t go my way**”.

The second aspect of self, which we’ll deal with the chapter after next, is fear. We will find, I think, that a fear is, in its broadest sense, the concept that “the future won’t go my way”.

The third aspect of self, which we’ll also deal with the chapter after next, is sex conduct. We will find, I think, that the purpose of dealing with sex conduct is to figure out how we should handle the most difficult of relationships in order to have good relationships of every kind.

So the Big Book’s ordering of Step Four is basically dealing with the Past, dealing with the Future, and then learning how to live in the present with other people. It’s very simple and very powerful!

Steps Five, Six, and Seven in one day!

You may ask how we can discuss three steps in one chapter? The reason is that the Big Book actually has us do Steps Five, Six, Seven, and even Eight, on the same day.

The Big Book's approach is very simple. **In Steps Four and Five we identify the character defects that block us from our higher power. In Steps Six and Seven we acknowledge our readiness to have those defects removed.** And the defects are removed through the actions taken in Steps Eight and Nine.

Step Five

“Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

Step 5 – [Pages 42 - 46](#) and Video [Session G](#)
Big Book "[Into Action,](#)" pages 72 to middle 76

Chapter 6

INTO ACTION

HAVING MADE our personal inventory, what shall we do about it? We have been trying to get a new attitude, a new relationship with our Creator, and to discover the obstacles in our path. We have admitted certain defects; we have ascertained in a rough way what the trouble is; we have put our finger on the weak items in our personal inventory. Now these are about to be cast out. This requires action on our part, which, when completed, will mean that we have admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our defects. This brings us to *the Fifth Step* in the program of recovery mentioned in the preceding chapter.

There is doubt about that. In actual practice, we usually find a solitary self-appraisal insufficient. Many of us thought it necessary to go much further. We will be more reconciled to discussing ourselves with another person when we see good reasons why we should do so. The best reason first: If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking. Time after time newcomers have tried to keep to themselves certain facts about their lives. Trying to avoid this humbling experience, they have turned to easier methods.

perience, they have turned to easier methods. Almost

72

INTO ACTION

73

invariably they got drunk. Having persevered with the rest of the program, they wondered why they fell. We think the reason is that they never completed their housecleaning. They took inventory all right, but hung on to some of the worst items in stock. They only *thought* they had lost their egoism and fear; they only *thought* they had humbled themselves. But they had not learned enough of humility, fearlessness and honesty, in the sense we find it necessary, until they told someone else *all* their life story.

Step Five:

The Big Book discusses Step Five from pages 71 to 75.

Why?

Pages 71 and 72 are taken up with discussing WHY we have to do Step Five.

The answer is ultimately pretty simple: ***"If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking [compulsive eating]."*** (page 72) The Big Book explains this in some detail. It is important, it says, in completing our housecleaning. If, as we found in Steps Three and Four, our problem is one of ego, of self-will, then we have to learn humility—that we aren't and can't be in charge of our own life, let alone the world. People, they say, who don't do Step Five, ***"had not learned enough of humility, fearlessness and honesty, in the sense we find it necessary, until they told someone else ALL their life story."*** (page 73) We live, they say, a double life in which we pretend to be someone we're not. ***"We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world."*** (pages 73-74) Page 74 deals with choosing the person we will share our story with. Aside from the very basic notion of ***"confession is good for the soul"***, there are other good reasons as well, not listed in the Big Book. We find that we aren't alone—that the person with whom we're sharing understands us and can probably match every one of our actions with one of his or her own. And we also get insight and feedback that might help us understand ourselves—neither taking ourselves too lightly or too seriously.

Who?

We must remember that the Big Book was published when there were no more than one hundred AAers in the entire world, so the Big Book tells us how to find someone.

The criteria are simple: ***“It is important that he be able to keep a confidence; that he fully understand and approve what we are driving at; that he will not try to change our plan”*** (pages 74-75).

How?

The Big Book then gives us instructions for meeting with the person to whom we tell our story: ***“We explain to our partner what we are about to do and why we have to do it. He should realize that we are engaged upon a life-and-death errand. Most people approached in this way will be glad to help; they will be honored by our confidence.”*** (page 75) When I do Step Five, I tell my friend how important it is that I do this step, how serious I am about the process.

The Big Book’s instructions on actually DOING the step are not very detailed. Here they are: ***“We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past”*** (page 75). That’s it. Exactly what are we supposed to do?

I take the Step Four Resentment form as folded over, with the name of the **person, institution, or principle** (column one), across from where I have been **selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, and frightened** (column four).

I read off the name, perhaps give a short identifier or explanation of the name, and then read off what I have written in the fourth column. I invite my friend to probe my responses, to see if there are other things I might write down and didn't think of. I go from name to name.

Study from the bottom lines to cover Columns 2 and 3] we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened? . . . [D]isregard the other person involved entirely. Where were we to blame? . . . When we saw our faults we listed them. We placed them before us in **black and white**. We admitted our wrongs honestly and were willing to set these matters straight." page 67)

I'm resentful at: (1)

Co-Worker (People)	Selfish:	I only cared how their absences would impede me.
	Dishonest:	Told myself I could handle the workload and did not ask for help
	Self-Seeking:	Want acknowledgement for a job well done (martyr) .
	Frightened:	That management would find out I could not do my job. Seen as LESS than.
International Governments (Institution)	Selfish:	I want to live in a peaceful world!
	Dishonest:	That this "really" doesn't have any affect on my day-to-day life.
	Self-Seeking:	I am tired of feeling depressed after watching the news.
	Frightened:	I am fearful of terrorist attacks near me. Fear of lifestyle changes.
I will never recover! (Principle)	Selfish:	Expectation of PERFECTION.
	Dishonest:	No recovery → no healthy body = unlovable.
	Self-Seeking:	Taking from the program and never giving back. I want to be slim.
	Frightened:	The fear is that it is true → and I am unlovable. I am unlovable

[Video Link: 14:27 - 15:21](#)

Then I take the Step Four Fear form and read it across the columns. “Here is one fear [column one], here are the reasons I have it [column two], I placed my trust and reliance upon my finite self [column three] and it didn’t work [column four], and I said the Fear Prayer [column five].” I then discuss briefly exactly what I think my higher power would have me be in relation to that fear.

Clear Form **THE BIG BOOK'S WAY OF REMOVING FEARS (PP. 67 & 68)**

INSTRUCTIONS: a) Study from the bottom of page 67 to the bottom of page 68 in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. b) Complete column 1 (listing whom or what I am fearful of), **from top to bottom**. c) Complete the remaining columns from **top to bottom** for each fear in column 1. Remember that “we are now on a different basis; the basis of trusting and relying upon God. We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves. . . . Just to the extent that we do as we think He would have us, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable us to match calamity with serenity” (page 68).

I'm fearful of: (1)	Why do I have the fear? (2)	Where was my trust & reliance? (3)	Did self reliance work? (4)		Fear Prayer: “God, please remove my fear and direct my attention to what you would have me be” (5)	What would God have you be? Write out your answer to that question for each and every fear listed. (6)
Seen as LESS than. (Perfectionism)	Fear if I allow you to see me as the flawed individual I am, you will reject me. (Fear of rejection)	Infinite God	My Finite Self	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	COMPLETED FEAR PRAYER? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Be of service to others. Be vulnerable with trusted friends. See myself as He sees me. (Flawed but lovable).
Fear of lifestyle changes. (Negative Thinking)	If there is an attack on the USA, I may be hurt. Who would take care of me? I have no one.	Infinite God	My Finite Self	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	COMPLETED FEAR PRAYER? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	To be a productive citizen and stay in the present.
I am unlovable. (Self Pity)	Consistent relapse. Past failures to get recovered! Failed to stay in recovery – right sized body.	Infinite God	My Finite Self	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	COMPLETED FEAR PRAYER? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	To first find a Power greater than me; Trust that Power; work the steps; don't eat my alcoholic foods no matter what.

[Video Link: 15:25 - 18:10](#)

Step Four—Sex Conduct Form

Then I take the Step Four Sex Conduct form and read it across the columns. “Here is a person I hurt [column one], here are the ways in which I was selfish, dishonest, and inconsiderate [column two], I aroused suspicion, but not bitterness or jealousy [column three], what I should have done instead was _____ [column four], the relationship was selfish [column five], and I said the sex prayer [column six] and the sex meditation [column seven].”

THE BIG BOOK’S WAY TO “SENSIBLY OVERHAUL” OUR OWN SEX CONDUCT (Pages 68—70)

INSTRUCTIONS: a) Study from the bottom of page 68 to the end of third paragraph on page 70. b) Fill in Column 1 from top to bottom. c) Do Column 2 from top to bottom. d) Fill in each of the remaining columns from top to bottom. Do not work across the page from left to right. Don't forget the **Sex Prayer** (“God, please mold my ideals and help me to live up to them”) on page 69, and the Big Book’s **Sex Meditation** (“God, please show me what to do about this [each] specific matter”) on page 69. “The right answer will come if we want it”. This will shape a “sane and sound ideal for our future sex life” (page 69). Be sure to restudy what happens if we “fall short of the chosen ideal and stumble” on page 70. Be sure to continue to pray the “Earnest” prayers from page 70 (on the right hand side of this page) for ongoing guidance, strength, sanity, and the right ideal. [Clear Form Data](#)

Whom did I hurt? (1)	Where was I (2)	Did I arouse: (3)	Where was I at fault, what should I have done instead? (4)	Was each relation? (5)	Sex Prayer Page 69(6)	Sex Meditation Page 69(7)	The Earnest Prayers page 70
<u>Ex-Boyfriend</u>		Jealousy?		S E L F I S H	Yes	"God, please mold my ideals and help me to live up to them."	We earnestly pray for: The right ideal Guidance in each questionable situation
Selfish:	I did not want to be alone; I stayed and continued using him for sex.	✓	Where was I at fault? I wanted him to change; to be who I wanted him to be.				
Dishonest:	I purposely flirting with others, in hopes of getting his attention.	✓					
Inconsiderate:	Instead of accepting the ending, I cared more about getting my desires met and getting even. I sought validation.	Bitterness?	What should I have done instead? The 1 st time he cheated (revealed his true character); I should have ended the relationship and honored my integrity !	No	✓	✓	

Promises!

The Big Book makes certain promises at the end of this part of Step Five. If we do not feel these promises, then we have almost certainly left something out, either in Step Four or in Step Five. Here are the promises as found on page 75:

Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator. We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual experience. The feeling that the drink problem has disappeared will often come strongly. We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe.

SESSION 7 2023 STEP STUDY

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Not yet finished!

But Step Five isn't yet finished. We've admitted to ourselves and another human being the exact nature of our wrongs, but we haven't yet admitted them to God. The Big Book tells us to go home and ***"find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done. We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better"*** (page 75). So we review what we've written—we look at all our filled-out forms again. Then we have a prayer: ***"God, thank you from the bottom of my heart that I know you better."*** Then the Big Book tells us to study the first five steps and ask our higher power ***"if we have omitted anything"*** (page 75). Have we done what has to be done? Have we said what has to be said?

If the answer is yes, and it will probably be yes, then we go on to Step Six that same day. If the answer is no, then we go back and figure out what we left out in either Step Four or Step Five.



Step 5 Questions:

- Do you have someone you trust enough to take Step 5 with; holding nothing back?
- Are you holding anything back? If so, why?
- Would anyone care to share something from Step 5? What have you admitted to yourself, to a trusted friend, and to your Higher Power?

Step Six

“Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”

76

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

If we can answer to our satisfaction, we then look at *Step Six*. We have emphasized willingness as being indispensable. Are we now ready to let God remove from us all the things which we have admitted are objectionable? Can He now take them all—every one? If we still cling to something we will not let go, we ask God to help us be willing.

Step Six:

Doing Step Four and Five the Big Book way, we have realized that we have four major character defects, all stemming from our wish to have our own way.

- **We are selfish**—we basically want our way, whether for good or bad or a mixture of reasons.
- **We are dishonest**—we don't tell others or ourselves the truth about reality.
- **We are self-seeking**—how others react to us defines how we feel about ourselves and we think of ourselves and not others.
- And **we are full of fear**.

Out of these four major character defects we have constructed any number of behaviors that create problems for us—a tendency to isolate, or to gossip, or to live in a fantasy world, or to manipulate others, or to have bad relationships with others, or to be full of anger, or to be paralyzed by fear, or to be full of lust or gluttony or pride or sloth or greed or envy, or to feel exceedingly sorry for ourselves— or a combination of many of these! But all of these behaviors come down to the four-character defects.

Are we ready to have our higher power remove these four major character defects? My experience tells me that you will be if you do Step Four the Big Book way. You won't want to hold on to selfishness, dishonesty, self-seeking, and fear, when you realize how they have truly harmed your life.

The Big Book promises **NOTHING** at Step Six. Our higher power is not going to remove our character defects at Step Six. The promise of that will only come halfway through Step Nine.

So if you're ready to have your higher power remove these four major character defects, you're on to Step Seven! **(If you're not, you say, "God, please help me be willing to remove my character defect of _____"** (page 76). Then go on to Step Seven anyway! Why wait? Recovery is just around the corner.)

Step Seven

“Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.”

Step Seven:

You say the prayer on page 76 of the Big Book.

My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.



Questions for Steps Five, Six, and Seven:

Some questions:

- Do you recognize the importance of sharing your character defects with another human being? Why is it important to you?
- What do you expect from the person who is going to hear your Step Five?
- Will you be open to that person's asking you questions, providing you with feedback?
- What do you think about the proposition that the behaviors that many of us have understood to be "character defects" (the Seven Deadly Sins, gossiping, etc.) are really symptoms of the four major character defects?

- Can you take something you thought to be a character defect and relate it to the four character defects (selfishness, dishonesty, self-seeking, and fear) discussed by the Big Book?
- Does doing Steps Six and Seven the same day as you do Step Five bother you?
- Why does it bother you? Is it simply because you think you should spend as much time on those steps as all the others? Because you've been told you should? Or because you think something may be missing? If so, what?

The Big Book suggests that we do Step Eight the same day that we do Steps Five, Six, and Seven. But we'll discuss Steps Eight and Nine together in the next chapter.

SERENITY PRAYER

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.