

Who am I?

A Look at Myself and
My Character,
Priorities, Responsibilities,
and Feelings

GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS

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This booklet is a guide to the moral part of Step 4: made a searching and fearless moral and financial inventory of ourselves.

Taking a look at yourself for the first time may appear to be a frightening experience, but it need not be. It is true that Step 4 says to take a “fearless moral and financial inventory”, but it is also a *step* which should be taken one *step* at a time. This guide is to enable you to take that first look at yourself.

First, let's break the inventory down into three parts:

1. Character

2. Priorities, principles and responsibilities

3. Feelings and emotions

Now buy a school exercise book!

Suggestions for tackling your inventory for the first time are printed in **bold** in the instructions. By doing it this way we found that we were able to make a start on discovering who we were.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE WHOLE INVENTORY

1. Divide your book into the three parts above.

2. Write down EVERYTHING!
3. Do it alone without prompting from anyone.
4. Be honest with yourself: only you will suffer if you are not.

Doing it for the first time?

Just do the scoring in Part 1; just read Part 2; just tick actions in Part 3; then stop and put away your inventory for at least 24 hours.

Remember that even asking the question “Who am I?”, should be tackled just one day at a time!

5. Share it only if you want to. As this will be only the first of your inventories, you may not be ready to share it yet.

6. Save it and look back at it from time to time.
7. Don't try and do it all in one go: take an hour each evening when you can sit down quietly (no TV). It may take two or three weeks, or even longer.
8. Do a new inventory at least yearly. Try not to look back at previous attempts until you have done a new inventory and then compare the two!

Remember that this step is *taking* the moral inventory. You are not expected to *do* anything about it right now. “Just for Today I will ... not tackle my whole life’s problems at once.”

Part 1: CHARACTER

Instructions:

1. Write down each character trait. Read each of the strengths and defects and, with a minimum of thought, mark each one out of ten. In each case zero is bad, and ten is good (e.g. if you are completely honest score ten; if you are totally selfish score zero).

2. Doing it for the first time? Mark a score for each strength and defect of character, but write down nothing else.

3. Read the strengths and defects again, and this time write a paragraph about each in the space provided. Here are some hints on what to write:

Each one can be seen in three ways:

- Behaviour: a way of acting.
- Individuality: those qualities that make one person *be* different and *act* differently from another.
- Moral: in agreement with a standard of what is right and wrong in character or conduct.

And from three points of view:

- Your own.
- Your wife's, parents' or children's.
- Everyone else's.

4. Now mark each quality again. Have you improved or lowered your marks? Think about

the differences? Was it because you were not entirely honest the first time? Or is it that, by being more thorough, you have learned more about yourself? Each time you do the inventory you will find you mark yourself differently on some of the qualities. It will reflect the flow and changes in your character that are going on all the time.

5. Finally, make a list with the highest at the top. You can now see how balanced your character is. Make a short list of the lowest scored qualities; keep it short: don't make it long or you will find yourself drifting into self-pity. You will need this when you tackle Steps 5 and 6 of the GA Recovery Programme later.

STRENGTHS OF CHARACTER

TOLERANCE:

Putting up with the opinions or behaviour of others without necessarily agreeing or sympathising.

HONESTY:

Being fair and candid in dealing and talking with other people; being open and sincere.

DIGNITY:

A state of worthiness, honour and self-respect about one's general appearance and manner.

HUMILITY:

Regardless of ability, fame or fortune, the state of mind that one is not better than another person.

INDUSTRIOUSNESS:

The giving of an earnest, hard-working, diligent and steady effort to all challenges undertaken.

OPTIMISM:

The tendency to take the most hopeful view of matters or expect the best outcome regardless of circumstances; the practice of looking on the bright side of things.

FORGIVENESS:

To give up the wish to punish or get even with; to pardon or excuse.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Obligation or expectation to account for; ability to tell right from wrong.

CONSIDERATION:

To be thoughtful of others and their feelings.

FRIENDLINESS:

On good terms; not hostile; the quality or condition of being friendly.

COMMUNICATION:

Ability to transmit and receive information and feelings, and understanding through talk, gestures or writing.

CHARITY:

Being kind and generous in the giving of help, understanding and compassion to those in need.

Add any other strengths of character for yourself.

DEFECTS OF CHARACTER

SELFISHNESS:

Having such regard for one's own interest or advantage that the happiness and welfare of others becomes of less concern than is considered right or just.

ALIBI:

To minimise, pardon, or excuse a wrong, a fault or an action as though it were unimportant.

FALSE PRIDE (ARROGANCE):

A belief in one's own worth, merit or superiority that is excessive and/or unjustified.

PHONINESS:

Presenting oneself as something one is not, manifesting this through actions, words and deeds; an imposter.

PROCRASTINATION:

Postponement or putting off of saying or doing those things that must be done.

LAZINESS:

Not willing or eager to work or exert oneself; doing only the minimum that has to be done in order to get by.

COARSENESS:

Not refined in feelings, manners, language or taste.

SELF-DECEPTION:

The act or fact of fooling oneself; self-delusion.

CONDEMNATION:

To criticise or condemn; being judgemental.

INSINCERITY:

Not honest or candid; deceitful.

IMPATIENCE:

Not willing to bear delay, opposition, pain or bother.

Add any other weaknesses of character for yourself.

**Part 2: PRIORITIES, PRINCIPLES
AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Instructions:

Doing it for the first time?

Read this section only. Do not write anything down.

On future occasions, it is better to be thorough on one question than to write just a few words on them all. Come back to difficult questions later.

Just for Today ... I will not tackle my whole life's problems at once...

1. TO MYSELF AND MY GREATER POWER:

One cannot be right for other people until right for oneself. In order for this to happen there must be an inner feeling of self-esteem and a feeling of belonging. When you become one with your own higher power, happiness and peace of mind are the results.

- a) Have you honestly faced yourself and examined your strengths and weaknesses?
- b) Write a description of yourself.

- c) After reading the description, can you say that you would choose a friend fitting that description?

- d) Would you say that you are neat and clean, both of mind and body?

- e) Imagine a model person possessing all the qualities that would make him a desirable friend. How do you compare?

- f) How would you describe your general attitude toward life?

- g) Do you believe in a power greater than yourself?

- h) Write a description of your higher power, whatever you conceive it to be. Be thorough.

- i) What do you will or wish for yourself?
- j) What do you think your higher power wills or wishes for you?
- k) Is there much difference?
- l) Would living the life designed by your higher power be fulfilling?
- m) Do you believe you can become *one* with your higher power?

2. TO MY FAMILY:

Through the family one can satisfy all the basic needs of a human being; to love and be loved; to cherish and be cherished; to provide and be provided for; to give and receive; to feel wanted and feel needed. All the basic

needs of a human being can be realised through the interaction of a family who love one another.

a) Write a short description of the love and care you have for each member of your family.

b) Write a short description of what you think each member of your family feels about you.

c) Do you reveal (or show) through words and actions the feelings you have for each member of your family?

d) Are you responsive to the material needs of your family?

e) Are you responsive to their emotional needs?

- f) Do you share your thoughts and feelings with your loved ones and do you allow them to share their feelings and thoughts with you?

- g) In what way do you set an example to your children?

- h) What do you do to earn their trust?

- i) Write a short description that would best describe your family life. Do you think that each member feels as though he or she is a vital part of it? See if you can determine whether each member enjoys peace of mind and happiness as a result of being a part of the family.

- j) What do you feel you can do to improve the general wellbeing of your family?

3. TO MY JOB, VOCATION OR PROFESSION:

The largest part of a person's life is spent performing his or her job, vocation or profession. A person's profession plays a vital role in the total picture relative to one's general wellbeing. All too often this area is looked on as a necessary evil rather than as an area to help achieve fulfilment.

- a) Do you enjoy your job? If not, why not?

- b) At the end of a day's work, do you feel that you have accomplished anything?

- c) What rewards do you think you acquire from your job?

- d) Do you give it your best effort?

e) How can you become better at what you do?

f) Do you think that you are in the right job or profession? If not, what do you intend to do about it or have you accepted that you *cannot* do anything about it?

4. TO MY GOALS, DREAMS AND ASPIRATIONS:

A person with goals has hope. Happiness and a healthy state of being are natural by-products in the pursuit of worthy goals. A hopeless person merely exists. The person with goals, dreams and aspirations lives life fully. By envisioning ways to rise above yourself and achieve that which is just out of your grasp, a healthy state of being is maintained. The thrill of living is not so much an achievement, as attempts to achieve. The pursuit of goals

fosters confidence, enthusiasm and courage. At day's end a person may be comfortable in the knowledge that he or she lives 24 hours with serenity.

- a) What are your goals of life? List them and write a description of each.
- b) Which of these are realistic, achievable and are worthy of your time and effort?
- c) Would the pursuit of these goals interfere with your other responsibilities? How?
- d) Are you doing anything positive to achieve these goals? What is your plan?
- e) Do you have a definite plan to achieve these goals?

f) What actions are you taking on a daily basis to achieve these goals?

g) What price are you willing to pay to make these goals a reality? Will it be worth the price?

5. TO MY FRIENDS, NEIGHBOURS AND COMMUNITY:

Our general wellbeing benefits from actions that we have with friends and neighbours and the part we play in our community. It offers us the opportunity to be an integral part in the general scheme of things. It is a great sense of fulfilment to feel you can be working and an integral part of the community of mankind.

a) Make a list of your closest friends and write a description of your feelings towards each.

- b) Is your action and behaviour towards them consistent with your feelings?
- c) Can you accept them for what they are, or do you find yourself critical of their shortcomings?
- d) Are you there when they need you?
- e) How would you describe your relationship with your neighbours?
- f) What do they think of you?
- g) What is your role in your community?
- h) Do you take part in any community activity, such as charitable work, neighbourhood committees, school associations etc.?

i) What do you do as an individual to make your community a better place in which to live?

6. TO MY AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

There are many other areas in life that apply to an individual that hold a high priority. We all have them, but they are different for each one of us. If they are all good, if we enjoy them and they are important to us, then we should pursue them, provided they do not interfere with the wellbeing of others.

a) Make a list of all your special interests and describe their benefits to you.

b) Do they have any value other than pleasure?

- c) Can you afford them financially?

- d) Do the other members of your family have an interest in them?

- e) Does doing these things place any hardship on your family?

- f) Do you ever find that you are shirking responsibilities in other areas of your life in doing these things? In what way?

Part 3: FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

Instructions:

Doing it for the first time?

Read the instructions and the list of feelings, and just tick those that you think you could improve. Then stop. Put away the inventory for at least a day and forget about it.

Feelings, whether positive or negative, are not defects of character. Feelings are a result of how we have handled situations in the past and are the result of our programming over the years.

Feelings can come over us without a moment's notice. All feelings, whether

positive or negative, are very natural and serve a definite purpose. Whatever your feelings are, they are not unique. The question is: how do we deal with them properly?

Feelings only become a problem when we become consumed with them, and if and when this occurs, it is usually because we have failed to understand them, failed to acknowledge their existence and failed to do anything about them.

Following is a list of feelings. They are a mixture of good and bad and not in any particular order.

Check each one for:

EFFECT ON ME: If a good feeling, am I feeling it when I should? If not, why not? If

bad, do I suffer from it? Does it affect my thinking?

NEEDS ACTION: After writing the effects on you, tick those needing action, but *do* nothing. This comes in Steps 5 and 6 of the GA Recovery Programme.

GUILT (REMORSE)

Feeling responsible for wrongdoing.

HAPPINESS

The continuing state of feeling good.

JOY

Magic moments of pleasure and happiness; being on an emotional high; close to ecstasy.

ANGER

More than just annoyed.

RESENTMENT

Anger at people or situations that affect our egos.

CONTENTMENT

Feeling comfortable, at ease.

FEAR

The state of being afraid; the effect of all or many feelings bearing down on us.

FRUSTRATION

Unable to do what we want to do, either from our own weakness or from outside causes over which we have no control.

LOVE

Refers to more than one level of relationship; love of nearest and dearest; love of friends; love of all mankind.

HOPE

The future is worthwhile; a steady drive towards sensible goals.

HATRED

Unreasonable dislike of another human being or ourselves.

GRATITUDE

A feeling of being thankful.

ENVY

Wanting what others possess.

LONELINESS

Isolation; feeling alone; drawing into ourselves.

PRIDE

I am capable of doing things well, and I know it.

DEPRESSION

May mean serious, clinical, depression or a feeling that the world is against us.

FREEDOM

A feeling of being able to make choices.

SADNESS

May mean grieving at a loss, or an unhappy state.

SUSPICION

Mistrustful of the intentions or actions of others.

WORRY

Concern about a future outcome.

Add any other feelings to your list.

CONCLUSION

Even after the first look at yourself, if taken in the spirit of a search for truth, you should have a basic overview of what you are made of, what you stand for, and where you are going.

Each time you do a bit more of your inventory you will learn more about yourself.

The main thing is you have made a start to sort yourself out in an orderly and thorough fashion.

It is a starting point for a meaningful and manageable life.

But a starting point is all that it is.

The task lies ahead

It is the task that stimulates growth

And growth brings happiness

And happiness means love

And love is truth

And the truth shall set you free

What is the GA Recovery Programme?

When compulsive gamblers apply the 12 Step GA Recovery Programme in their lives, disintegration stops and unification begins. These steps are basically spiritual in their concept and their practice can be highly rewarding. These are the steps which are suggested as a programme of recovery:

1. We admitted we were powerless over gambling that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to a normal way of thinking and living.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of this Power of our own understanding.

4. Made a searching and fearless moral and financial inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have these defects of character removed.
7. Humbly asked God (of our understanding) to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God (as we understand him), praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having made an effort to practise these principles in all our affairs, we tried to carry this message to other compulsive gamblers.

These steps enable us and thousands of others to lead happy, productive lives. They represent the foundation upon which our society has been built.

They were given to us freely, for which we are grateful.

Phone numbers and contacts

Notes

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

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