

WESTBORO BIG BOOK STUDY TAPE GROUP

All Saints Anglican Church

Saturday Morning 9:00 a.m.

347 Richmond Road (near Churchill)

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Chapter 6 - Into Action

(Tape 6 - 01:16:20.0)

J & C Let's go to page 72, "Into Action". We want to run very briefly now through Steps 5, 6 & 7. So we go to page 72, Into action, now it's not into thinking, it's into action

Big Book p. 72, par. 1

Having made our personal inventory, what shall we do about it? We have been trying to get a new attitude

J & C Remember Dr. Jung said (BB p. 27, line 18) "Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, ..."

Big Book p. 72, par. 1

and a new relationship with our Creator

J & C And our book said back on page 45 (line 13) that the main object of this book would enable me to find a power greater than myself, which would solve my problem.

Big Book p. 72, par. 1

and to discover the obstacles in our path.

J & C And what are some of the obstacles ... the resentments, fears, harms done to other people

Big Book p. 72, par. 1

We have admitted certain defects

J & C And what are these defects, selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, frightened, and inconsiderate attitudes

Big Book p. 72, par. 1

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.

J & C We know that Step 5 says, 'We admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs'. But if you'll notice here in the narrative, he said the exact nature of our defects. Now people used to ask Bill about this and we've known two ladies that worked with him/for him for years and they both tell us the same thing. People would say Bill, why did you use the word 'wrongs' in Step 5, yet in the narrative here in the book you use the word defects? And by the way Bill, what's the difference anyhow between a wrong in 5, a defect in 6, and a shortcoming in 7? And they both said that Bill would just rear back and smile and he would say when I took English and Writing courses in college they taught me not to use the same words over and over. It shows how dumb you are. He said there really are no differences in these things. He said,

- (a) In Step 4, we find those things that block us off from God.
- (b) In Step 5, we're going to talk about them to another human being.
- (c) In Step 6, we're going to become willing to turn them loose.
- (d) In Step 7, we're going to ask God to take them away.

And he said, you can call them anything you want to, a wrong, a thought, a mistake, a defect, a personality flaw, whatever. We're going to notice on the next couple of pages that's exactly what he does with them. I followed it up in the 12 & 12 thirteen years later. Not only does he do it there, he does it twice as bad as he did in the Big Book. Using these words interchangeably, back and forth, all of them meaning identically the same thing.

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Big Book p. 72, par. 1

This is perhaps difficult - especially discussing our defects with another person. We think we have done well enough in admitting these things to ourselves. 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.

J & C You take these forms now (Step 4 Inventory pg. 65), and the very, very vital information that we've got here.

The book says that the solitary self-appraisal is insufficient.

I did the very best I could do filling out these forms with the limited knowledge that I had and experience, but I did the best I could do.

Now I take these to another human being and discuss them from left to right all the way across.

Someone else who has gone on before me and whose done the inventory according to the Big Book and now that person is going to help me to glean more information out of each of these situations that's going to help me.

I need that information, because a solitary self-appraisal is insufficient. I'll give you an example.

Looking around this room today, this weekend, I've noticed two or three character defects. It's real easy for me to look at you and see your defects of character. There's nothing between you and me except air. But

It's very, very difficult for me to look at me and see the truth and see my defects of character because of years and a lifetime of rationalization and justification of these attitudes.

I need another human being to be able to look at me objectively and help me see things I couldn't see cause I'm starting out on a brand new lifetime engagement here and I need all the information and help I can get to have a very successful life.

And I did the very best I could do on the inventory process, but a solitary self-appraisal is insufficient.

I need God and another human being to help me see things that I couldn't see.

Now to be sure we have to contradictions here over on page 73, on that first paragraph where it says, "More than most people..." the sentence before that says,

Big Book, p. 73, line 7

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.

J & C Now there's the statement that got us confused about Step 4.

And we all began to write our life story thinking that would be Step 4. But as we can see 95% of our life story really doesn't have anything to do with our alcoholism.

The fact I was born in 1929 that really doesn't have anything to do with it. But I'll tell you what I have done.

If I've taken the inventory the way the book says, I've shared my life story in those areas that really count.

Resentments didn't come in my head just today. They've been popping in my head as far back as I can remember.

I've shared all my life story - resentment wise.

Fears didn't come in my head just today. They've been coming in my head as far back as I can remember.

I shared all my life story - fear wise.

The harms I've done to other people. I didn't just hurt them yesterday.

I've been hurting people as far back as I can remember.

My mother said to me one day, Charlie, you were the meanest kid I ever say. She said I had a little problem loving you myself. Now when Mama don't love you, you're pretty bad off. As I look at these things today, my whole life is centered anyhow around those

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three things. Those resentments, those fears, and those harms I've done to others. So I don't have any quarrel with that statement at all any more. If we've done our inventory the way the book says, we've shared our life story. Now here's why we need to share this with another human being.

Big Book p. 73, par. 2

More than most people, the alcoholic leads a double life. He is very much the actor. To the outer world he presents his stage character. This is the one he likes his fellows to see. He wants to enjoy a certain reputation, but knows in his heart he doesn't deserve it.

J & C A practicing alcoholic is trying to live two lives. You know we've got a conscious. Whenever we're sober we try to live like people are supposed to live. But when we're drinking, since alcohol lowers the inhibitions, we do things we would never think about doing sober. We're living two lifetimes when we are a practicing alcoholic.

Big Book p. 73, par. 2

The inconsistency is made worse by the things he does on his sprees. Coming to his senses, he is revolted at certain episodes he vaguely remembers. These memories are a nightmare. He trembles to think someone might have observed him. As far as he can, he pushes these memories far inside himself. He hopes they will never see the light of day. He is under constant fear and tension that makes for more drinking.

J & C You know let's face it; we alcoholics have become the world's greatest con artists. You have to be. You couldn't live as a practicing alcoholic if you didn't learn how to lie, cheat, con, manipulate, steal, whatever's necessary. And I think the one we have to con the most is ourselves. I don't think we could live with ourselves if we had to really see what's going on when we're drinking.

But you see we got a little thing called resentments.

And we use those resentments to transfer blame to others and that way we can live with ourselves.

Now if you've been doing that for 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 40 years and you come to A.A. and you take Step 4, you'll be just as honest as you can with yourself - but let's face it, we can't be honest with ourselves.

I now need to take my inventory,

take it to another human being, one who has walked this walk before me who understands 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 according to the Big Book and have them help me see the things I can't see about me

They're not going to change anything in Column 1, they're not going to change anything in Column 2, but they'll probably change some things in Column 3.

In one place I said this was caused by the sex instinct and he said nah it isn't,

he said you're just trying to build your self esteem that's all your trying to do.

In the fifth column in one place I said this was caused by fear, and he said this is plain damn dishonesty, that's all this is.

He helped me see things I couldn't see.

We're getting ready to start a lifetime changing process.

We need to be sure that we're trying to change the right things,

so we can have peace of mind in the future.

And we just can't see that by ourselves. I know confession is good for the soul. And I if you belong to a denomination that requires it you ought a go do that. But I still think you ought a take your inventory to somebody in A.A., preferably a good sponsor if you got one that knows the program.

The main thing is do they really know the program?

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If they do they can help us.
If they don't then all we are going to get out of it is confession

We need more than that. Page 74 tells people, tells you how to pick somebody. That is not valid today like it was in 1939. In '39 the first person out here in California that got this Big Book, didn't have any other A.A. members or any sponsor and it was difficult for them to find somebody to do Step 5 with. That's what page 74 deals with. But today there's plenty of good people out here in California that understands this program, that have worked this program, that have walked this Step before, that's who we need to select to take Step 5 with. Hopefully it will be our sponsor, page 75 tells us how to do that.

Big Book p. 75, par 1

When we decide who is to hear our story, we waste no time. We have a written inventory and we are prepared for a long talk. 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.

J & C I'll never forget when I called my sponsor Franklin, and I said Franklin can I come over this weekend and do my inventory, do my Fifth Step. He said sure, I'd love to have you come over. So I went to there to Olive Branch, Mississippi and I sat down there with Franklin that evening and I said I've got it all prepared here, you've helped me a lot and I appreciate it. He said yeah I know you do and I'm ready to get started, but first of all let's you and I do the 3rd Step Prayer together. That's the kind of sponsor I had and we asked God to be with us during this process. And we did that and we sat about looking into this inventory process and Franklin helped me see things that I couldn't see. I shared these things with him from left to right, all the way across and he asked me questions and helped me see things I couldn't see, and shared with me some of the things that had happened with him and how he could see things. And it helped me a whole lot, it helped me a lot And then after that weekend was over, like the book says

Big Book, p. 75, par 2

We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past. Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, we are delighted.

J & C Now we see the results. Some more promises.....

Big Book, p. 75, par 2

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.

J & C We believed in Step two, now we begin to have a spiritual experience

Big Book, pg. 75, par 2

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.

(Tape 6 - 01:29:12.0)

13 minutes