Step 4 Resentments

Make the List — Names, Institutions and Principles

Set up some uninterrupted time.

Recite the Third Step Prayer.

Ask God to help you list your names.

Go back and list all the names of people, institutions, and principles you have had resentment toward in your life.

Just list names and don’t list why you had the resentment. You will work on that when you are done your list.

Try to work on this daily even if you only list a few names that day.

Thank God at the end of each session for the help you received.

Resentments — Causes and Effects

1. **List the names** of the person, institution, or principle on the top line.

   - **People could be:** family, you, teachers, friends, strangers, employers, employees, neighbors, classmates, AA members, relationships, etc.

   - **Institutions could be:** churches, schools, prisons, police, marriages, hospitals, government, etc.

   - **Principles could be:** common beliefs, rules of behavior, rules of science, God, spiritual laws, unwritten codes, methods of operation, cultural norms, etc.

2. **List the causes** on the next line. Group them like the Big Book does on page 65 for each name. Be very brief on each cause.
Effects:

1. **Personal relations**—how you act or react with them or others because of this resentment.

2. **Sex relations**—how this resentment affects your sex conduct.

3. **Self-esteem**—how you feel about yourself because of this resentment.

4. **Financial security**—how this resentment affects your pocketbook—monetary resources.

5. **Emotional security**—how this resentment affects your personal well-being.

6. **Physical security**—how this resentment affects your physical well-being.

7. **Ambition**—how this resentment affects your drive for advancement.

8. **Fear and Pride**—could be included in any of these causes (your decision) use abbreviations if you want as long as you understand what they represent!

**Cause Examples — (Keep Short and to the Point)**

- Let’s dogs bark
- Drives too fast
- Know it all
- Mower wouldn’t start
- Said she didn’t like me
- Hit me with the ball
- Didn’t like my humor
- Not giving to U.W.
- Not doing job right
- Always wants to win
- Being cheap
- Called my dog ugly
- Said I wore a toupee
- Conceited
- Unfriendly
- Sold me dumb pigeons
- Put me on the spot
- Said I was “a know it all”
- Called AWOL a waste
- Didn’t praise me
- Crapped on my lawn
- Reckless voter
- Insulted me
- Pulled my hair
- Ignores me
- Bossy
- Cutting in gas line
- Lied to me
- Not doing share
- Hypocrite
- Too conscientious
- Cheats at sports
- Tries to be popular
- Stood me up
- Always talking sex
- Manipulating
- Moody
- Button pusher
- Flirted with Laura
- Said I was immature
- Was loud at retreat
- Thirteen stepper
Turn Around Instructions

This is the part of the resentments that we call “turn arounds” which deals with our part in the resentment. This is also the “exact nature of our wrongs” which we share in the fifth step. Hopefully, you will see the truth in this part. It can be very freeing. Please keep answers brief and to the point.

Self-seeking is usually some kind of action to get your way or look good.

If you have questions, use your Big Book Step Study sponsor. Let your sponsor sponsor you! Don’t leave anything out. This is like spiritual surgery. You want to get out every sick cell from your thinking. This process has stood the test of time. It will work for you, if you follow directions.

Don’t leave your fourth step out for others to see. People are curious and want to see what you have written. If they do see it, it could cause many problems!
I’m *selfish*: In wanting or not wanting and expecting people to do things my way, in my time and priorities, in my thoughts and opinions, and thinking nothing bad should happen to me, etc.

I’m *dishonest*: By setting myself up, by being hypocritical, by playing God, in not minding my own business, in reliving this, in changing the truth (scripting), by not admitting my fault, in not discussing this with them, in not accepting this, in having unrealistic expectations, by breaking the law, in not seeing they were doing their job, in not having gratitude, in not going to God, in not realizing they don’t have/use a spiritual program, by taking this personally, in not forgiving them, etc.

I’m *self-seeking*: (Doing things to feel better about this): By using intimidation, being unkind, demanding, by people pleasing, by expanding on the problem, by self-pity, by gossiping, by creating revenge fantasies (script writing), by being aloof, body language, withholding love, character assassinating, etc.

I’m *frightened*: (Fears caused by this resentment): Of not being loved, of being abandoned, of not being respected, of authority figures, of failing, of feeling less than, of people’s opinions, of not getting what I want, of losing what I have, etc.