



# Recovery Ministry

## Step Four: Just the Facts

Working with Jesus

**iFOLLOW**

The iFollow Discipleship Series

## About the iFollow Discipleship Series Pastor's Edition

### Categories

The iFollow Discipleship Series is designed to be used in congregations to assist people in their pursuit of God. This assumes that individuals are in unique places in their journey and there is no perfect set of lessons that everyone must complete to become a disciple—in fact discipleship is an eternal journey. Therefore the iFollow curriculum is a menu of milestones that an individual, small group, or even an entire church can choose from. The lessons can be placed in three general categories: **Meeting with Jesus** (does not assume a commitment to Jesus Christ); **Walking with Jesus** (assumes an acceptance of Jesus Christ); and **Working with Jesus** (assumes a desire to serve Jesus Christ).

### Components

Each lesson has a presenter's manuscript which can be read word for word, but will be stronger if the presenter puts it in his/her own words and uses personal illustrations. The graphic slides can be played directly from the Pastor's DVD or customized and played from a computer. There are also several group activities and discussion questions to choose from as well as printable student handouts.

### Usage

The lessons are designed to be used in small groups, pastor's Bible classes, prayer meetings, seminars, retreats, training sessions, discussion groups, and some lessons may be appropriate sermon outlines.

### Credits

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## Recovery Ministry: Step Four Just the Facts

*This is the fifth in a series of eleven units on how to lead a 12 Step addiction recovery ministry.*

### Learning Objectives

1. Review the needs of the mentoring relationship as it relates to Step Four.
2. Learn specific skills and assignments to help the mentee move from the first three, preparatory, Steps to the beginning of concrete action.
3. Remember H.O.W. the method works for Step Four.
4. Recheck the six attitudes and actions.
5. Learn the specific goals of Step Four.

### Content Outline

1. Introducing Step Four
2. Recap H.O.W. for Step Four
- C. Backup assignments
- D. Review the Six Attitudes and Actions
5. Step Four Summary and Goals

### Background Material for the Presenter

Each Step takes about four weeks to complete. The 12 steps take nine to 12 months to work through. But each mentee will move through the program at their own pace. A mentee may move more quickly or slowly through the Steps depending on the level of commitment and honesty, the amount of time dedicated to homework, number of outside commitments, etc. It is up to you as the mentor to determine whether or not the mentee is ready to move to the next Step. Each Step has a “Goals” section to help you decide on the mentee’s readiness to move on.

This unit introduces Step Four. The assignments are broken down into four week-long sections. You can give fewer assignments during that week if the mentee needs

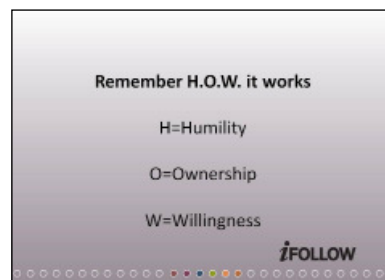


more time, or give more assignments if the mentee is effectively completing the work with the appropriate level of commitment and emotion. The four-week breakdown is just a guideline which can be modified. Using the H.O.W. method will help you to determine a mentee's state of mind and readiness to take the next Step in recovery.

## Remember H.O.W. it works

**H=Humility**—Humility is foundational to recovery; admitting our need is the only way we can receive help from God for our problems. Of all the Steps which need humility, Step Four is arguably the most humbling. It is impossible to remain proud or arrogant, or even defensive and self-excusing if we set out, with the help of God and our mentor, to make a searching and fearless self inventory. It's the desire not to search too deeply that feeds pride, and the fear that feeds defensiveness. Dispense with both of those, and choose humility.

**O=Ownership**—Acknowledging our problem is also primary to recovery. Owning our actions, attitudes, past and present, and accepting the fact that we are the only ones who can change who we are on the inside, is key to any lasting change. This is the Step where that ownership really starts to make a difference. "I did it, this is what I did, this is whom I did it to, and here are some of the underlying motivations." Motivations, however, are not excuses. There is no excuse, only forgiveness. Thank God, there is lots of that!



**W=Willingness**—Willingness is the third key to the door of progressive victory over our addiction. Willingness is our response to the challenge to face any obstacle; complete any task set before us; to do whatever it takes to achieve freedom from addiction. At this Step, it's not so much a matter of being willing to do anything about what we've done; it's just the matter of being willing to make the inventory—the complete count—which will seem impossible at first, and in a sense, is. Only God really knows everything our addictions have led us to do, but He will help us make the inventory as complete as we need to make it at this time.

These three keys must still be working together in a mentee who is ready to tackle Step Four. This can be the most terrifying Step yet. A mentee who was already a believer but is learning to see God in a new light will feel tremendous guilt when s/he starts looking clearly at his/her record. A new believer may be tempted to either take more blame than necessary, or may wish to skim over the whole thing. "That's in the past. I'm a new creature now!" The mentor must be prepared to deal with either extreme, helping the mentee

to transition from the first three preparatory Steps to ones that require more concrete actions as they trace their way together down the long, hard road to recovery.

## Some Things to Watch For

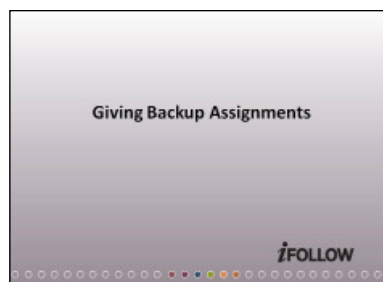
The mentee is open to correction. He or she welcomes information that will help them grow despite how “bad” they look in light of the information. For no Step is this as important as it is for Step Four. The addict will feel extremely “bad” in the light of this list. Help them keep clear sight. The actions are as bad as they are. They’ve caused a lot of pain. The doer of those actions is still redeemable, and is well on the way. And when you’re lost, you can’t see where to go until you see where you’ve been and where you are now.

For this Step, the mentee can see and express ever more clearly how new insights have affected their attitudes and actions. A light bulb may go on. “I see! I had *this* attitude, which caused *that* action, but now that I am learning *this* attitude, I can choose that action instead!” Each week, there may be specifics they can point to, of things they used to do one way but now do differently; things which once led them to turn to their addiction for comfort, but now that’s unnecessary. At the same time, this is a painful Step, and mentees must be able to express emotions it brings up, but without falling into a pit of guilt or self-condemnation (or self-excuse).

They will now face the facts about their problem which they have not clearly seen before, and they must be helped to balance remorse with recognition of new hope on the horizon; in fact, closer than the horizon. New hope is in action right now, or they wouldn’t have reached this Step. They will find that they can accept personal responsibility for their actions and attitudes of the past, and change them, beginning now. Their feet will be voting, and they will begin to climb out of that deep, dark hole they’d dug for themselves and thought they’d never get out of.

## Giving Backup Assignments

What if you have given your mentee the primary assignments and still don’t perceive your mentee is ready to proceed to the next Step? Pray for wisdom. God knows exactly what they need, and He will tell you what you need to do. Be creative. After God, you probably have the best picture of the mentee’s current state of mind (isn’t that a scary



thought?). Look for areas and issues the mentee seems to be avoiding. That probably means they are unwilling or unable to surrender there.

We have found in these cases a steady diet of Bible study on the perceived problem, either word or character studies, will reveal the problem. For Step Four, have them find Bible characters who sinned greatly, then confessed their sins and asked God's forgiveness. David is a particularly good example, especially in Psalm 51. If your mentee gets bogged down in the Moral Inventory, have them take a break and list some of David's sins. Did he gain God's forgiveness? How? What did God have to say about him? Or how about Peter?

By sending them to God, they tap into the Source they need in order to see the problem themselves. God dispenses His wisdom freely. If they are willing, God can provide them with humility, and ownership. He does stuff like that.

It is important not to rush the program. There is no time limit. God works with us and through us right where we are. We shouldn't try to move on until He is done with us. Continue to pray for wisdom and ask questions. If you continue to reflect the truth to them, they will be drawn to it like a moth to a candle. Faced with the bankruptcy of our souls, even the hard work of recovery looks good.

In any assignments you give, whether primary or backup, the emphasis should remain on honesty and action. The mentee should not sermonize, quote the readings back to you or, analyze the finer points of recovery as a third person narrative. The mentor should see honest reflection—"what this means to me"—in all the writing the mentee does. After all, you can read the books, too. The mentor should look for what the mentee got from the assignment, and what they intend to do about it.

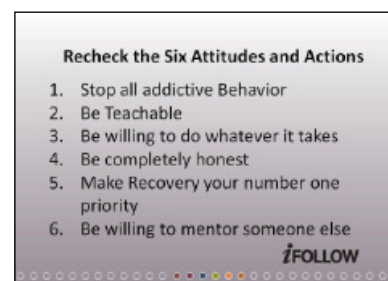
If necessary, you may go back to Handouts included in the first Recovery unit and repeat or adapt certain backup assignments.

## Recheck the Six Attitudes and Actions

These six attitudes and actions are hard enough to initiate. They are much harder to maintain, in the drama and minutiae of daily life and with the enemy of our souls pulling out all the stops to make us fall back into old, unhealthy patterns. Mentor and mentee should sometimes return and recheck the Six Attitudes:

1. *Stop all addictive behavior.* And stay stopped.

2. *Be teachable.* As the 12 Step slogan goes, "Ya gotta wanna." As Hebrews 13:17 says: "*Be responsive to your pastoral leaders. Listen to their counsel. They are alert to the condition of your lives and work under the strict supervision of God. Contribute to the joy of their*



*leadership, not its drudgery. Why would you want to make things harder for them?"* (The Message)

3. *Be willing to do whatever it takes.* Again and again.

Nothing changes if nothing changes. God will indeed change you. But first you have to decide if you are willing to pay the price.

4. *Be completely honest.* It may have seemed easier for awhile. Now it's harder again. But it's always worth it. Remember how the "rigorous honesty" of the 12 Steps created both terror and hope when you first came into the program. As you sit in meetings and hear others share openly about both successes and failures, as you have begun to talk about your failures, your temptations, and your sin, you are not shamed or ostracized. Be sure to give yourself the same consideration and compassion. The hope is drawing closer, and the terror is fading away.

5. *Make recovery your number one priority.* Today *and* tomorrow. Long-term sobriety and freedom from the pain that has driven you all your life is beginning to look possible. By now, your sobriety date is several months in the past. God is thoroughly changing you from the inside out and you are learning a whole new way of living. That process takes time. Your weekly group meetings, mentoring meeting, and daily phone calls are a normal part of your life now. Your reading and writing assignments may be even longer than they used to be, but now that you can see how much they help, you can more easily be faithful to them. After this Step (often a difficult one for everyone) there are only eight to go! Of course, this new way of life is forever. Are your family and friends beginning to see and accept a new you? If so, they are beginning to see why recovery work is your number one priority. Reflect on Jesus' words about what it means to be His disciple, "*For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but who ever loses his life for my sake shall find it.*" (Matthew 16:25) Your very life is at stake.

6. *Be willing to mentor someone else.* A common trait addicts share is deep self-centeredness. Once you've done the work of getting your heart in order, mentoring another helps keep the focus off yourself and puts you in active service to others. And you "re-work" the Steps for yourself as you guide another through them.

## Step Four

**We now make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**

In Step Four we search ourselves thoroughly, accepting only the truth. We seek to assemble not just a list of things we have done, but find the underlying motivations for our actions. We seek to identify our character defects by examining the evidence of our actions. Like a good



detective, we seek to understand not only the “Who” and “Where,” but the “Why” as well.

**Goal:** In order to move on to Step Five, the mentee must have thoroughly examined his or her character to face all actions, feelings, and beliefs that are blocking from a deeper relationship with God.

This document is designed to be a resource for the mentor. Portions of these pages are to be copied and given to the mentee, the individual the mentor is working with. The individual working the Steps should not work ahead. The pace of progress is at the mentor’s discretion. The intent of weekly assignments is to move through the process in a thorough manner, not missing any detail. Moving too quickly through the assignments puts one at risk of missing something which may lead to relapse.

In addition to the various assignments, a daily (without fail) phone calling schedule must be set up and a weekly meeting time to go over homework and give new assignments.

Recovery is all about the journey; our goal is progress, not perfection. As in the parable of the Good Samaritan, the fallen need a hand up, healing and a ride back to Recovery Town. Our goal is health, nothing more and certainly nothing less. Never forget that this person is the Lord’s, not “mine;” that I don’t know in my own wisdom what is best; that even when I disagree with this individual or am disappointed in his or her work, I must not judge, or view this one as “bad” or inferior. I ask God for the grace to see this one through His infinitely patient eyes, as a person in process, who I pray will make it through to the end. Because, above all, my God is the God of the Second Chance.

## Handouts in this Package

1. Review of My Fears
2. People I Have Harmed
3. Review of My Resentments
4. Review of My Sexual Conduct
5. Step Four Assignments Schedule



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## Additional Resources

- AA Services (2002). *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. New York City: AA World Services, Inc.
- AA Services (2001). *Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book Fourth Edition*. New York City: Works Publishing.
- Andrews University Department of Social Work (1997). *Helping Hurting Members*. Lincoln, NE: AdventSource.
- Cannon, Carol (1993). *Never Good Enough*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association.
- Gates, Hal (1995). *Regeneration Manual*. Silver Spring, MD: American Health and Temperance Association.
- Kearney, Joseph (2008). *A Christian 12 Step Recovery Program*. Orlando, FL: Recovered Through Christ, Inc.
- McQ., Joe (1990). *The Steps We Took*. Atlanta: August House Publishers, Inc.
- Miller, Keith (1992). *A Hunger for Healing: The Twelve Steps as a Classic Model for Christian Spiritual Growth*. New York City: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Miller, Keith (1992), *A Hunger for Healing Workbook*. New York City: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Shoemaker, Samuel; Pittman, Bill and B., Dick (1994). *Courage to Change: The Christian Roots of the 12-Step Movement*. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell Company.
- Williams, Don (2004). *12 Steps with Jesus*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books.

## Websites

- Adventist Regeneration Ministries is an official ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church sponsoring 12 Step groups in local churches, schools and community service centers: [www.adventistregenerationministries.org](http://www.adventistregenerationministries.org)
- Alcoholics Victorious is a national network of groups that use the 12 Steps in the framework of Evangelical Christian theology: [www.alcoholicsvictorious.org](http://www.alcoholicsvictorious.org)
- Bridge to Recovery is a private, supporting ministry of Seventh-day Adventists recognized by the Health Ministries Department of the North American Division and a member of ASI: [www.bridgetorecovery.org](http://www.bridgetorecovery.org)

Christian Recovery International is a website listing many national networks of Christian 12 Step groups, recovery ministries and resource organizations around the world helping the Christian community become a safe place for people recovering from addiction, abuse or trauma: [www.christianrecovery.com](http://www.christianrecovery.com)

National Association for Christian Recovery is a non-denominational parachurch organization connecting 12 Step groups and other recovery ministries in local churches across the U.S.: [www.nacronline.com](http://www.nacronline.com)

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## Discussion Questions

1. What would happen if we had all church members, not just addicts, follow these steps? In particular, discuss (perhaps in pairs or small teams) this fourth step and its implications. Have you ever tried to make a “searching and fearless moral inventory” of yourself?
2. What are some of the differences between taking responsibility for one’s own actions and blaming or beating oneself up over them?
3. Could God bring positive results and blessings out of the years of a person’s addictions? In what ways?
4. Has God brought positive results and blessings out of your besetting sins?

## Group Activity

**Purpose:** To gain a clear perspective of what God thinks of sinners.

**Preparation:** You will need Bibles, concordances, paper, and pens or markers. Also enough tables for people to divide into teams of about four people.

**Assignment:** Have each team look up one Bible character who was known to be a sinner, but who also repented. Choices with a fair amount of information are limited, but it doesn't matter if more than one table chooses the same character. The team answers the following questions, which may be posted on a board or flipchart:

1. Who is your character?
2. Do you think he/she was an addict? If so, addicted to what?
3. Make an inventory, or list, of this character's sins.
4. Find and be prepared to share the passage in which the person repents. What attitude does it show?
5. Find a passage that shows what God's response was to the person's repentance.
6. What were the future results?
7. Did the person ever relapse into the earlier attitudes and actions? If so, what happened?

**Time:** Allow 30 minutes for each group to find a character and answer all questions. Then allow a few minutes per table for someone to make a report. Finally, allow 20 minutes (more for a large group) to discuss feelings, reactions, and implications.

# Handout 1

## Review of Our Fears

COLUMN 1		COLUMN 2		"SELF" COLUMN 3 Affects My... (Which part of self caused the fear?)								COLUMN 4 What is the exact nature of my wrongs, faults, mistakes, defects, shortcomings:					
I'm fearful of:		Why do I have the fear?		Social Instinct		Security Instinct		Sex Instinct		Ambitions							
				Self-Esteem	Personal Realization	Material	Emotional	Acceptable Sex Realizations	Hidden Sex Realizations	Social	Security	Sexual	Selfish	Death oriented	Self-Seeking	Frightened	Inconsiderate
1																	
2																	
3																	
4																	
5																	
6																	
7																	
8																	

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# Handout 2

## People I Have Harmed

		"SELF"								COLUMN 4							
		COLUMN 3								What is the exact nature of my wrongs, faults, mistakes, defects, shortcomings:							
		Affects My...															
		(Which part of self caused the harm?)															
		Social Instinct		Security Instinct		Sex Instinct		Ambitions									
		Self-Esteem	Personal Relationships	Miscarital	Emotional	Acceptable Sex	Relatable	Hidden Sex	Relatable	Social	Security	Sexual	Selfish	Dishonest	Self-Serving	Prigged	Inconsiderate
COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2																
Whom did I hurt?	What did I do?																
1																	
2																	
3																	
4																	
5																	
6																	
7																	
8																	

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# Handout 3

## Review of Our Resentments

		"SELF"										COLUMN 4								
		Affects My...										What is the exact nature of my wrongs, faults, mistakes, defects, shortcomings:								
		(Which part of self caused the fear?)																		
		Social Instinct		Security Instinct		Sex Instinct		Ambitions												
		Self-Esteem	Personal Relationships	Material	Emotional	Acceptable Sex Relationships	Hidden Sex Relationships	Social	Security	Sexual	Selfish	Disrespect	Self-Seeking	Frightened	Inconsiderate					
COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2																			
Who did I harm?	What did I do?																			
1																				
2																				
3																				
4																				
5																				
6																				
7																				
8																				

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# Handout 4

## Review of Our Sex Conduct

		"SELF"										COLUMN 4							
		COLUMN 3										What is the exact nature of my wrongs, faults, mistakes, defects, shortcomings:							
		Affects My...																	
		(Which part of self caused the harm?)																	
		Social Instinct		Security Instinct		Sex Instinct		Ambitions				Selfish	Dishonest	Self-Seeking	Frightened	Inconsiderate			
		Self-Esteem	Personal Relationships	Material	Emotional	Acceptable Sex Relationships	Hidden Sex Relationships	Social	Security	Sexual									
COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2																		
I'm resentful at:	The cause:																		
1																			
2																			
3																			
4																			
5																			
6																			
7																			
8																			

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# Handout 5

## 12 Step Assignments Schedule—Step 4

Completed	Week 1
	Monthly review of Boundaries with your mentor
	“My Agenda” exercise
	Read the last part of Chapter 5 in <i>Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above
	Read the section on Step 4 in <i>The Steps We Took</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above
	Read the section on Step 4 in <i>12 Steps and 12 Traditions</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above
	Read the section on Step 4 in <i>Hunger for Healing</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above

Completed	Week 2
	Review of Fears
	Review of Resentments
	Review of Sexual Harms
	Review of Harms

Completed	Week 3
	Phone check review of inventory. (No one-on-one meeting this week while completing inventory.)

Completed	Week 4
	Review Inventory for accuracy and breadth
	Schedule a time to complete Step 5
	Read the first part of Chapter 6 (pages 72-75) in <i>Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above
	Read the section on Step 5 in <i>The Steps We Took</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above
	Read the section on Step 5 in <i>12 Steps and 12 Traditions</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above

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	Read the section on Step 5 in <i>Hunger for Healing</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above

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