

Step Five - "Admitting the Truth"

Your Sponsor's Companion Packet

1 Sponsor's Welcome

Congratulations on completing the "fact-finding" moral inventory. You now have a clear, written picture of the patterns that have been running your life. Step Four was the *inventory*; Step Five is the *admission*.

This step asks you to bring that picture into the light by admitting the "exact nature" of your wrongs to three parties: God (as you understand Him), yourself, and another human being. Think of it as moving from a private journal to a shared conversation. The act of speaking the truth out loud breaks the spell of secrecy, shame, and isolation. This is where the healing truly begins.

2 Core Concept - The Three-Way Admission

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

The Big Book (4th ed.) gives us the specific instructions for this step right after we complete our inventory.

Section	Pages	What It Shows
"Into Action" (Primary)	pp. 72-75	This is the "how-to" guide for Step Five. It explains <i>why</i> we do it, <i>with whom</i> , and the profound <i>promises</i> that follow.
12x12 - Step Five Essay	pp. 53-59	This provides a deep dive into the spiritual and psychological relief of this step, and the freedom it brings.
"How It Works"	p. 63-64	This section, which you read for Step 3 & 4, sets the stage for this "vital and searching" admission.

3 What to Do This Week

Action	How to Do It	Approx. Time
Re-read the Big Book Instructions.	Read "Into Action" (pp. 72-75) carefully. This will calm your fears and explain the process.	15 min
Schedule Your Step Five.	Contact your sponsor (or the trusted person you've chosen) and set aside a quiet, private time (1-2 hours) where you will not be interrupted.	5 min
Read Your Step Four Inventory.	At the meeting, take a deep breath and read your entire Step Four inventory aloud, exactly as you wrote it. Do not skip, edit, or summarize. The step is "the exact nature," not a summary.	1-2 hours
Receive Feedback.	Your sponsor will listen. Afterward, they will likely share some of their own experience to show you that you are not alone.	15-30 min
Follow the "Closing" Instructions.	The Big Book (p. 75) gives us a simple closing: "We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better." Take a quiet moment of gratitude.	5 min

4 Tradition Five - "Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

Step Five is the *personal practice* of Tradition Five. The tradition says our purpose is to "carry its message." By sharing your unvarnished truth with your sponsor, you are doing exactly that.

You are carrying the message that you are no longer willing to live in secrets. You are carrying the message that the steps are working in your life. This act of honesty breaks your own isolation, and it strengthens your sponsor's recovery by reminding them of the power of this program. It is the message of hope, shared.

5 Common Fears & Feelings

Emotion	Why It Surfaces	Simple Coping Tool
Fear of Judgment	Anticipating "What will they think?"	Remember: your sponsor has done this too. Their job is to listen and support, not to judge. This is an act of trust.
Shame	The pain of speaking hidden wrongs aloud.	This is the "poison" of the secret leaving your system. Speaking it is the antidote. It loses its power when it hits the air.
Anger Toward Self	Realizing the depth of the harm done.	Acknowledge the feeling. This is a natural part of seeing the "exact nature" of things. Let it pass.
Vulnerability	Feeling "exposed" and raw.	This is a sign of true courage. Ground yourself. Hold a small object or a cup of tea. Breathe.
Profound Relief	The natural after-effect of admission.	Allow yourself to feel this! This is the promise of the step, the "sunlight" breaking through.

6 Reflection & Integration (Your Personal Worksheet)

1. Rate Your Relief Level after the admission (1 = terrified, 10 = peaceful).

[1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8][9][10]

2. **What Surprised You Most** about speaking your inventory aloud?
3. **One Insight Gained:** What pattern of behavior (selfishness, fear, etc.) did you see most clearly while speaking?
4. **The Feeling of Freedom:** The Big Book (p. 75) says we "can look the world in the eye." How does this feel for you right now?
5. **Affirmation:** "I have admitted the exact nature of my wrongs. I am no longer alone with my past."

7 Suggested Follow-Up Reading

Source	Pages / Sections	What to Highlight
Big Book - "Into Action" (Primary)	pp. 72-75	The Promises on p. 75. ("We are delighted. We can look the world in the eye..."). Read these again after you are done.
12x12 - Step Five Essay	pp. 53-59	The discussion on "the exact nature of our wrongs" and the healing power of humility.
12x12 - Tradition Five Essay	pp. 150-155	The idea that "simple honesty" is the core of our message.

8 Moving Toward Step Six

You've done it. You have "cleaned house." The Big Book says that after this step, we have completed our "one-man housecleaning." Now that the "wreckage of the past" is cleared away, you can stand in a clean room and see the "defects of character" that remain.

You are now perfectly positioned for Step Six: "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."

9 Quick-Help FAQ

Question	Short Answer
What if I'm terrified to tell my sponsor?	This is normal. It's fear of judgment, and it's the "bondage of self." The act of reading it,

	<i>despite the fear, is what breaks the bond. Trust the process.</i>
Do I have to admit <i>every</i> detail?	You must read your inventory <i>exactly as you wrote it</i> for Step Four. The step is "the <i>exact nature</i> of our wrongs." We don't filter or summarize.
Can I just give them a written note?	No. The power of this step is in <i>speaking</i> the words aloud and <i>hearing</i> yourself say them to another human being. This breaks the isolation.
What if the person I tell reacts badly?	This is why we choose a sponsor or trusted person in the program. But if they do, <i>their reaction is theirs, not yours.</i> Your responsibility is the honest admission.

10 Final Encouragement

You have just taken one of the most courageous actions in the program—speaking your whole truth. Feel the weight lift. The Big Book promises that "we have been walking alone, weighted down by a secret... We are delighted. We can look the world in the eye."

You can look the world in the eye today. You are no longer alone with your past. Welcome to the sunlight.

-Your Sponsor