12 STEPPERS

Step 4 Sex Conduct Inventory Worksheet

A Guided 4th Step Sex Inventory With Examples

A printable 4th step sex inventory focused on honesty and harm, not judgment. Includes prompt lists, a worked example and prompts to shape a healthy ideal for the future. For AA, NA, Al-Anon, OA, CoDA and other 12 step programs.

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Want the complete 4th step workbook?

This worksheet is one part of the free **Step 4 Worksheet** from 12steppers.org, which includes all four inventories, a character defects and assets checklist and guided reflection questions. Find it at 12steppers.org.

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SECTION 1

Before You Begin

Step 4: "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."

What This Inventory Is, and Isn't

This is the part of Step 4 many people dread, so it helps to be clear. The Big Book says plainly that it doesn't want to be anyone's judge of sex conduct (page 69). This inventory isn't about your orientation, your identity or consensual choices that fit your values.

It's about harm: whom we hurt, where we were selfish, dishonest or inconsiderate and what we should have done instead (page 69). The goal is what the Big Book calls a "sane and sound ideal" for the future, not shame.

How to Use This Worksheet

1. **Read, then write.** Each section opens with a short explanation. Read it, then fill in the chart that follows.
2. **Go one column at a time.** Finish all of Column 1 before you touch Column 2. This keeps you from arguing your case on every line and helps patterns show up.
3. **Work with a sponsor.** Step 4 is designed to be shared in Step 5. Ask your sponsor how they'd like you to approach it, and call them when you get stuck.
4. **Set a steady pace.** Pick a regular time and place to write. Don't rush and miss things, and don't let it drag on for months either.
5. **Keep it private.** Store your inventory somewhere secure and share it only with the person you choose for Step 5.

Suggested Reading

Read the sex conduct section of Chapter 5, "How It Works," in *Alcoholics Anonymous* (pages 68 to 70) before you begin. It's free to read online at aa.org. Members of other fellowships can pair this worksheet with their own step literature.

A note on safety and self-care

Inventory work can stir up painful memories, including trauma, abuse or grief. That's normal, and it doesn't mean you're doing it wrong.

Sexual abuse or assault done **to** you is not your sex conduct, and it is not your fault. Don't list it here as something you did. Please consider talking with a counselor who specializes in trauma, as well as your sponsor.

If you feel overwhelmed or unsafe, pause and reach out. In the U.S., you can call or text **988** (Suicide and Crisis Lifeline) any time, or call SAMHSA's free National Helpline at **1-800-662-4357**. This worksheet is a recovery tool, not medical or mental health treatment.

SECTION 2

How the Sex Conduct Inventory Works

Keep your entries brief and factual. Your sponsor needs to understand what happened, not relive it. Leave out graphic detail, and use initials instead of full names if that helps you feel safer.

How to Fill Out the Sex Conduct Chart

Column 1: Whom did I hurt?	Name each person, using initials if you prefer. You can include yourself.
Column 2: What happened?	A brief overview in a sentence or two.
Column 3: Was I...	Check selfish, dishonest or inconsiderate.
Column 4: Did I arouse...	Check if your actions unjustifiably caused jealousy, suspicion or bitterness.
Column 5: My fault	What was your part? What were you hoping to gain?
Column 6: Instead	What would a healthy, honest choice have looked like?

> **Tip: you don't have to finish this alone**
>
> If a memory feels too heavy to write down, make a short note so you don't lose it and talk it through with your sponsor first. Thoroughness matters, but so does pacing.

What the Words Mean

Selfish	Putting my wants ahead of the other person's needs or wellbeing.
Dishonest	Lying, hiding or leaving things out, including with myself.
Inconsiderate	Not thinking about how my actions would affect the other person.
Jealousy	Making someone fear they'd lose me to someone else.
Suspicion	Giving someone reason to doubt my honesty or faithfulness.
Bitterness	Leaving someone with lasting hurt or resentment.

SECTION 3

Relationships and Behaviors to Review

Check anything that fits, then carry the names into Column 1. You don't need to list every relationship you've ever had, only the ones where harm, dishonesty or selfishness played a part.

PEOPLE

- ☐ Spouse or partner
- ☐ Former spouses
- ☐ Former partners
- ☐ Dates
- ☐ Casual partners
- ☐ Partners' family or friends
- ☐ Myself
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

BEHAVIORS

- ☐ Cheating or infidelity
- ☐ Lying about where I was
- ☐ Hiding a relationship
- ☐ Pressuring someone
- ☐ Using sex for approval or control
- ☐ Flirting to make someone jealous
- ☐ Breaking commitments
- ☐ Disappearing without a word
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

PATTERNS

- ☐ Rushing into relationships
- ☐ Using relationships to escape
- ☐ Choosing secrecy
- ☐ Acting against my values
- ☐ Blaming partners
- ☐ Repeating the same fights
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Sex Conduct Inventory

Work down one column at a time and finish it before moving right. The shaded row is an example.

		COL. 3:			COL. 4: DID I				
Col. 1 **Whom did I hurt?**	Col. 2 **What happened?**	Selfish	Dishonest	Inconsiderate	Jealousy	Suspicion	Bitterness	Col. 5 **Where was I at fault?**	Col. 6 **What should I have done instead?**
My ex-partner	After an argument, I flirted openly with a coworker at a party to make her jealous.	✓		✓	✓		✓	I wanted to punish her and feel wanted. I made her feel humiliated in front of friends.	Left the party, cooled off and talked it through honestly the next day.

Sex Conduct Inventory (continued)

Need more rows? Print this page again or add rows in the Word version. Work down one column at a time and finish it before moving right. The shaded row is an example.

		COL. 3:			COL. 4: DID I				
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Sex Conduct Inventory (continued)

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SECTION 5

My Ideal for the Future

After the chart, the Big Book suggests shaping a “sane and sound ideal” for the future and asking for help to live up to it. It also offers a simple test for each relationship: is it selfish or not (page 69)?

It's also realistic. If we fall short, the suggestion is to be honest about it, learn from it and keep growing rather than giving up (page 70).

A. What does a healthy, honest relationship look like to me?

B. What values do I want to guide my romantic and sexual choices from now on?

C. What warning signs tell me I'm slipping back into selfish or dishonest patterns?

D. What will I do when I notice those warning signs? Who will I call?

Which boxes did I check most?

	Times checked
Selfish	
Dishonest	
Inconsiderate	
Jealousy	
Suspicion	
Bitterness	

What Comes Next

Harms list	People you hurt here may also belong on your harms list, which becomes the start of your Step 8 list.
Step 5	You share your finished inventory with your Higher Power, yourself and another person, usually your sponsor.
Steps 8 and 9	Amends come later, with your sponsor's guidance, and only where they won't cause more harm.

SECTION 6

Resources and Sources

Read the Step 4 Literature Free Online

- Alcoholics Anonymous World Services. "The Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition)." *aa.org.* Read, listen or watch in ASL.
- Alcoholics Anonymous World Services. "Chapter 5: How It Works." *Alcoholics Anonymous (PDF).* The Step 4 inventory instructions appear on pages 63 to 71.
- Alcoholics Anonymous World Services. "Step Four." *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (PDF).* Begins on page 42.

If You Need Support Right Now

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. "SAMHSA's National Helpline." *SAMHSA.* Free, confidential treatment referral and information, 24/7, in English and Spanish: 1-800-662-4357.
- 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. "988 Lifeline." *988lifeline.org.* Call or text 988, or chat online, any time.

More From 12steppers.org

- 12steppers.org. "Step 4 Worksheet: The Complete 4th Step Inventory Workbook." *12steppers.org.* All four inventories, a defects and assets checklist and guided questions in one free download.

You'll also find standalone Resentment, Fear, Sex Conduct and Harms Done worksheets, plus worksheets for every step, at **12steppers.org**.

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