



15 January 2023

Reply: a4fv

Attached to this are the first 12 pages of a CGA workbook. Page 2 & 3 introduce definitions, and Page 4 begins Step #1. Each succeeding page is followed by Questions To Be Honest About.

Those questions prompt interesting answers during group sessions, but even on our own we can dig deeper and write out our answers. The latter produces far greater dividends.

Self Awareness is the ultimate goal for homosapiens, since long before GNOTHI SEAUTON (KNOW THYSELF) was etched into the Temple of Apollo at Delphi.

Along this journey of discovery always remember us in prison who are answering these questions, facing the pain of guilt. Trust me, its tough — but we get through it.

Be selfish in your Recovery: "regaining of something lost. A return to health, consciousness, etc. — a regaining of balance, control, composure."

Which brings me to the following List of Character Defects and the contrasting List of Character Assets/Spiritual Principles, to use as reference points — of what to get over and aspire toward.

For the Love of Truth!

Fiat Lux.

Criminals & Gangmembers Anonymous

WE HONESTLY RECOGNIZE OUR SHORTCOMINGS WHENEVER BAD HABITS SURFACED, PROMPTLY
CORRECTING OUR THINKING AND ACTIONS.

LIST OF CHARACTER DEFECTS

Abrasive	Angry	Apathetic	Aloof	Argumentative
Arrogance	Attention-Seeking	Belligerent	Bigotry	Bitter
Bossy	Braggart	Careless	Cold-Hearted	Complaining
Compulsive	Cruel	Deceitful	Defensive	Denial
Dependent	Depressed	Detached	Discriminatory	Disorganized
Distant	Distrustful	Dramatic	Egocentric	Envious
Evasive	Excessive Pride	Fearful	Forgetful	Glutton
Gossiping	Grandiose	Greedy	Guilt	Hate
Head-Strong	Hostile	Humorless	Immature	Impatient
Impulsive	Inconsiderate	Inconsistent	Indecisive	Indulgent
Inhibited	Insecure	Insensitive	Intolerant	Isolated
Jealous	Lazy	Lustful	Lying	Manipulative
Materialistic	Negative	Neglectful	Obsessed	Opinionated
Over-Emotional	Passive	Perfectionism	Pessimism	Preoccupied
Perverse	Procrastination	Promiscuity	Prudish	Quarrelsome
Mean	Rebellious	Reckless	Resentful	Rude
Rueful	Sarcastic	Secretive	Self-Centered	Self-Condemning
Self-Doubting	Self-Hating	Self-Importance	Selfishness	Self-Justifying
Self-Pity	Self-Seeking	Short-Tempered	Shy	Stingy
Stubbornness	Submissive	Thin-Skinned	Thoughtless	Tight-Fisted
Timid	Unauthentic	Uncritical	Undependable	Undisciplined
Unemotional	Unfriendly	Unrealistic	Unromantic	Unscrupulous
Unstable	Vague	Vain	Vindictive	Vulgar
White-Knuckled	Withdrawn	Workaholic		

LIST OF CHARACTER ASSETS/SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES

Accepting	Agreeable	Analytical	Approving	Assertive
Attention-Giving	Attentive	Bold	Careful	Cautious
Cheerful	Concerned	Confident	Considerate	Content
Controlled	Cooperative	Decisive	Dependable	Disciplined
Extroverted	Flexible	Forgiving	Free	Friendly
Generous	Gentle	Good Listener	Giving	Guilt Free
Helpful	Honest	Humble	Industrious	Involved
Kind	Lawful	Loving	Moderate	Modest
Loving	Supportive	Compassionate	Nice	Open
Open-Minded	Optimistic	Organized	Outgoing	Patient
Peaceful	Permissive	Persistent	Playful	Polite
Rational	Realistic	Relaxed	Reliable	Romantic
Selfless	Self-Liking	Self-Sufficient	Sensitive	Serene
Mindful	Sociable	Social	Specific	Spiritual
Steady	Straight-Forward	Thoughtful	Tolerant	Trusting
Unassuming	Adventurous	Warm	Willing	Witty
Easy	Enjoyable	Comforting		

WHY?
NOT

CGA

CRIMINALS & GANGMEMBERS ANONYMOUS



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THE LIFESTYLE ADDICTION TO CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

► CULTURAL INFLUENCES:

The power of persons and the things they do, such as beliefs, interests, manners, customs and habits that are passed along in some form of communication that influences the beliefs, thinking, development, behavior and habits of those in the next generations that follow.

► GANGMEMBERS:

Two or more individuals, with or without a group name who associate with each other following destructive beliefs and whose behavior, actions and habits are centered around illegal activity.

► DELINQUENTS:

Those who have a normally hostile attitude, acting out in aggressive ways to those in authority. Those who neglect to follow rules and intentionally refuse to obey laws.

► VANDALISM:

Those who take or destroy public or private property with the full intention of and sometimes without the knowledge of causing unlawful harm, pain, injury or distress to others.

► THEFT:

Those who steal, commit robbery or burglary taking property or possessions without legal consent through violence, deception, trespassing or intimidation.

► WHITE COLLAR CRIMES:

Those who commit fraud, embezzlement and other crimes through deceiving, misrepresenting the truth or abuse of property inside the workplace, no matter what business or profession.

► SUBSTANCE ABUSE:

Those who use alcohol or drugs of any type repeatedly and frequently until it becomes a destructive habit causing harm, injury or death to oneself or others.

► SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION:

Those who wrongfully use or misuse sexual activity for personal pleasure while hurting, mistreating, injuring, insulting abusing excessively another without consent or decency and with no respect for their rights.

► DEALERS:

Those who sell or buy merchandise, drugs, sex, weapons, cars, property and people through illegal means for profit and personal gain.

► VIOLENT CRIMES:

Those who intentionally act out with great physical force to injure, damage or destroy to obtain control, cause fear or self-gratification through vicious aggression inside the home, workplace, public spaces, etc...

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THE DUAL PROBLEM CREATING A LETHAL COMBINATION OUR LIFESTYLE OF ADDICTION AND CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

We have chosen a lifestyle that appeals to us, whether decent or indecent. If it's decent, we hide behind our professional appearance and manipulate. If it's indecent, we're simply bold and generally aggressive. Our lifestyle can encourage our self-justification for relying upon illegal activity to provide us pleasure, gratification or a means to supplement our income or status.

BELIEFS

Choice of Profession – Traditions – Prejudices – Selfishness
Self-Centeredness Irresponsibility – No Fear – No Weakness

MANNERS

Attitude – Actions – Influence – Words – Tone – Expression

HABITS

Taking any of the above and doing/using them so often
they become the normal way we do things

Our Addiction works in a Cycle. It always begins with an OBSESSION; a persistent idea, desire or emotional rush. It convinces us that we can, should and will get away with a crime, so we plan to proceed. The COMPULSION; follows with an irresistible impulse to perform the act. Once we have successfully 'gotten away' with an act, the obsession will return and the compulsion will follow, until we are repeating the same illegal act over and over again. This means that we have moved into the third stage of the Cycle of Addiction: PROGRESSION. We keep committing crimes, living out of control until we are handcuffed and arrested or dead.

CRIMES OF COMMON CHOICE

Often related to;

CULTURAL INFLUENCES

DELINQUENTS

VANDALISM

THEFT

GANG VIOLENCE/MEMBERSHIP

VIOLENT CRIME

DEALING

(Drugs, People, Sex, Merchandise, Etc...)

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

SEXUAL DEVIANCY

WHITE COLLAR CRIMES

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STEP ONE

WE REVIEWED OUR PAST, ADMITTING A LACK OF STRENGTH AND CONTROL OVER OUR ADDICTIONS TO ALL FORMS OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITY AND THAT OUR LIFESTYLE WAS NOT DECENT NOR MANAGEABLE.

Irresponsibility can come in many forms, from outright laziness and not caring to frustration and quitting. For many of us, irresponsibility was a large part of our destructive lifestyle. It was easier to do, or take, what we wanted than it was to be responsible and legally earn what we wanted or needed.

Some of us may have even tried at some point in our lives to “straighten up,” only to fall back into our old, irresponsible ways because of some ‘set-back’ or ‘failure’. Quitting in frustration, abandoning our hopes and dreams.

In CGA we have the Twelve Steps and the experience of those who have trudged the path of Recovery before us as a path back to the people we were meant to be – Decent and Responsible.

In CGA we can begin to learn to be responsible people, one Step at a time. Understanding and overcoming one Defect of Character at a time, by practicing the opposite. Becoming responsible to those we harmed in our past destructive lifestyle by making amends and not repeating those behaviors again. Being vigilant to our own character and how we’re feeling and doing. Developing a personal relationship with God along spiritual lines. Reaching out to help others like us. We all have the ability to change and become decent, responsible people again.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. Why was it easier to take what you wanted rather than legally earn it? Were there outside influences which led you to this type of behavior? Please explain:
2. Have you ever quit, given up or abandoned some responsibility in your life because of frustration or failure? What was the final result of your actions and how do you feel about yourself?
3. Do you believe that you can change and become a decent, responsible person again with the help of the CGA Twelve Step Recovery Program? Please personalize your answer.

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

IRRESPONSIBLE: Not responsible, Not answerable to higher authority, Said or done with no sense of responsibility, Lacking a sense of responsibility, Unable to mentally or financially bear responsibility.

RESPONSIBLE: Able to answer for one’s conduct and obligations, **TRUSTWORTHY**, Able to choose for oneself between right and wrong, Marked by involving responsibility or accountability.

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STEP ONE

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Most of the time as we were living a destructive lifestyle, we often hurt those around us and those we say we love. Parents, children, family members and friends. Many people were affected by our selfishness and the things we did. Others were affected by our irresponsibility and the things we failed to do. Like being a good father, or a good son, or hold down a job, or treat the women in our lives right. Our destructive lifestyle had an effect on those around us.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What relationships did you damage or destroy because of your crime and destructive lifestyle?
2. Were any of your relationships based on lies, manipulation, selfishness or pure lust?
3. Did you ever break promises to the people you care(d) about?
4. Knowing that you have parents, children and friends that need you out there, why didn't that stop you from committing crimes?
5. Did you have a bad influence on those you cared about?
6. In all the time you spent with your family and friends, did they ever get to know the "Real" you?
7. Do you have a problem with relationships today?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

PROBLEM: An intricate, unsettled question; difficulty in understanding and accepting.

CHANGE: To make different in some particular way.

PATTERN: Reliable sample of traits, acts, tendencies or other characteristics.

BEHAVIOR: The manner of conducting oneself.

ADDICTION: A compulsive need for and use of ...

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In our lifestyle, we are dishonest. We justify our actions and make excuses for our lifestyle. In Step One, we examine our past in a mirror of Honesty, in its reflection we have no choice but to admit the ruthless trauma we have caused to others and ourselves. This is the First Step toward being honest with ourselves – recognizing and accepting those facts that we cannot deny.

For maybe the first time, we are now choosing to abandon the comfortable cloak of dishonesty, choosing to stop justifying our actions and face our past. We have come to the realization that if we continue living the life we have been – we will continue the same destructive lifestyle and that brought us to the place we are right now.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. How has dishonesty helped you? How has dishonesty harmed you?
2. What are you doing to become honest with yourself and others?
3. Do you still try to justify your past? How? Why?
4. Has being dishonest damaged your relationships with others? How? Why?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

DISHONESTY: The act of telling a lie, cheating, deceiving, stealing, making someone believe something that is not true, Fraud, Falsehood.

JUSTIFY: To be free from blame, declare guiltless, supply good or lawful grounds>

EXCUSE: Free of blame, exonerate, minimize, good reason, overlook, to release from obligation, Defense.

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STEP ONE

WE REVIEWED OUR PAST, ADMITTING A LACK OF STRENGTH AND CONTROL OVER OUR ADDICTIONS TO ALL FORMS OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITY AND THAT OUR LIFESTYLE WAS NOT DECENT NOR MANAGEABLE.

In "The Problem As We Understand It" it says, in part:

Through deception we'll fit in among those we need to and without conscience, easily betray anyone to satisfy ourselves. We are quick to blame and slow to be responsible and accountable for our actions. We are the source of the problem.

Promise #1 says:

We slowly begin to develop trust, instead of judging others and resist changing ourselves.

The last paragraph of "Why Are We Here" says:

We are here because we are now responsible for ourselves and full accountable for what we think, what we say and ultimately, what we do.

Tradition #12 Says, in Part:

...reminding each member of CGA to practice principles of respect, balance, harmony, compassion and loving-kindness – refraining from taking other people's inventory and having self-defeating, judgmental attitudes.

If we go back to the end of 'The Problem As We Understand It', and rely on that alone, it's kind of depressing. Often stated as "I am the problem". This understanding is only partially correct and at the same time, if taken literally, way, way off base. I am the source of the problem is what it really says. What that means is that it is my warped views, my shortcomings that are keeping me from being honest and truthful in my relationships. From practicing the principals in Tradition #12, or living up to the word or Promise #1. I am the only one who can change this. I am the only person who can change my circumstances.

In Step 1, we talk about Beliefs, Manners and Habits. We also talk about Relationships, Responsibility and Spirituality. By putting "I am the source of the problem" into use we can begin to see where it is our own selves that are getting in the way of living out who we really are, without the limiting, restrictive beliefs that kept us from truly connecting with others.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What does "I am the source of the problem" mean to you? How has it affected your relationships?
2. Historically, what have you blamed on others that if you applied Step 1, you could take responsibility for?
3. If, "I am the source of the problem" does not mean "I am stupid" or "I am wrong", what does it mean?
4. What could you do, right now, today, to put "I am the source of the problem" into use in your life?

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Taking the first step into Recovery is very important. This is when we come to realize a problem (or series of problems) exist in our lives. If we do not discover the truth for ourselves, we will not feel there is anything we need to change and therefore the Twelve Steps or the CGA Program itself have nothing to offer. To understand where we are, we have to 'look back' to identify a pattern of behavior which brought us to this point. For example, when we committed a crime once and kept finding reasons to justify repeating the same crime (or other types of crimes), then a problem exists. But what cause this problem? It is called "addiction" to illegal activity. Once we plan a crime in our mind, then follow through in doing it, we get away with it and decide to do it again. The more often we commit a crime or crimes, the worse we get. We're living out of control, irresponsibly, our relationships with others are affected and we fail to practice spiritual principals.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What was your crime of choice (the one that once you started doing it, you couldn't stop)?
2. If you are a gangmember, why do you feel you have to associate with only certain people and justify doing whatever they do knowing it is wrong?
3. How many times have you told someone you would not get into trouble anymore, but you did anyway?
4. How many relationships have you damaged or destroyed because of your involvement in illegal activity?
- 5.

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

PROBLEM: An intricate, unsettled question; difficulty in understanding and accepting.

CHANGE: To make different in some particular way.

PATTERN: Reliable sample of traits, acts, tendencies or other characteristics.

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There cannot be an honest self-admission that a problem exists in one's life until the person can convince themselves by some clear, indisputable proof. If the person does not realize they have a problem, no one or nothing will be able to convince them otherwise. If the person does not truly believe they have a problem, they will not take the Twelve Steps, nor Recovery serious simply because they will feel there is no need to.

To establish proof of a problem existing, the individual has to review their own past which will give them the facts they cannot dispute. This review is not an inventory it is simply a review (looking back over again; survey of past events or experiences; a re-examination) to identify a pattern of behavior that shows the person has committed a particular crime of choice repeatedly and did not or could not stop.

The Three Parts of Step One

Addiction is a habit and a habit is something we repeat over and over, lacking the ability to stop. There are three parts (components) of the 'Cycle of Addiction' and when working together are strong and controlling. These three parts/components operate in a specific order:

1. OBSESSION:

The obsession comes first - and is most dangerous. It is in the obsession that we walk directly into a tunnel and cannot see anything except what we want at the end of the tunnel. It is a persistent idea, desire or emotion that we cannot get rid of through reasoning. We convince ourselves we want something or we should have something to bring us pleasure or some form of self-gratification.

The OBSESSION is triggered by an idea (we plan to do something and convince ourselves it is right and that we can get away with it), it can be a desire for something, that we need something, or it can be an emotional rush that something looks good and we have the "mental taste or craving" to get it, or an "emotional rush" caused by pain, fear or anger that we must get revenge or to retaliate for some offense to us.

What was something illegal you were obsessed with? For example: The idea to steal, (take by some means of force or manipulation), go to some place to associate with certain people and know the things you'd do would be illegal.

The desire to have some substance to ease stress or frustration, to take away pain or to simply "feel better". To do something simply for the pleasure to satisfy a craving.

An emotional rush to control someone, to punish someone, to injure someone for pleasure, revenge or to retaliate for something we feel was wrong to us or affected someone we cared about.

REMEMBER, WITHIN THE OBSESSION IT DOES NOT HAVE TO BE ONLY A SINGLE IDEA, DESIRE OR EMOTION – BUT A COMBINATION OF THE THREE AS WELL.

2. COMPULSION:

The next part of the 'Cycle of Addiction' that immediately follows the obsession (and we immediately take action through) is the COMPULSION to achieve our illegal task. This compulsion has a powerful driving force, (the obsession) that is simply irresistible and once we act, we repeat performing some illegal act irrationally (which means with poor judgment, willingly and normally with prejudice).

What is your crime of choice that once you did it you repeated it and kept justifying doing it over and over?

What substance did you use to bring pleasure or to escape guilt, shame or stress after committing a crime?

How many times did you do something which you knew was illegal, but justified doing it over and over? Why did you feel you had to be in an area where your friends were even when you knew something illegal was going to happen?

3. PROGRESSION:

The third part of the 'Cycle of Addiction' is the PROGRESSION. This simply means that each time we have an obsession to commit a crime, then act on the idea, desire or emotion by taking action to get what we want, either for pleasure or some other form of self-gratification, the longer we commit a crime or crimes in concert with one another, or the more we remain in gang activity, our problems get worse and we get further 'out of control.'

Often, while in the active addiction to a specific crime of choice, we did not have the strength and control over our addiction to see any of the effects our actions had on our lives and the lives of those around us. As a result we often damaged or destroyed relationships with those close to us, our families, spouses, children, relatives etc.. We also affect our friendships and the public trust.

What relationships did you damage or destroy because of your particular crime of choice?

We are irresponsible people, we refuse to be liable, to be accountable for our actions, we blame others, we are untrustworthy and we simply fail to keep our word to ourselves and others.

Have you been irresponsible? Did you have a legal job? If so, why wasn't it enough? Did you commit crimes at work? Did you refuse to work a legal job because it was easier to commit crimes? Did you lie and manipulate people to commit a crime or to cover up crimes you were committing? Did you blame others for creating your problems?

Our understanding and practice of a Religious Belief System is avoided or denied when the Cycle of Addiction is turned on. If we do not have any Religious Belief System, this helps us to justify doing wrong, because we can make excuses and are not accountable to God, or we feel that we are already unloved and not favored by God and since God doesn't care – Neither will we.

- How were your religious practices blocked through your addictions?
- Did you rely upon religious practices only after you were caught or put in jail?
- Why didn't you rely on Religious Practices to stop you from committing crime?

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STEP ONE

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H. O. W.

HONEST, OPEN-MINDED AND WILLING – HOW IT HAS HELPED ME BECOME A BETTER PERSON TODAY

Being honest with ourselves and others can be something we experience as being very difficult, due to our past lifestyle, constitution and beliefs. Now working these Twelve Steps of Recovery; Honesty, Open-Mindedness and Willingness are the most important tools in this process.

First and foremost, is Honesty! You can continue lying to those around you or even those of us here in this room, but being honest with yourself is what matters. Once you stop being honest with yourself, you fail in this recovery process. Just think about it, it's not the Recovery Process that fails you...

Part of the wonderful power of our minds is the ability to change what we think, what we value and how we react. When we find something that just isn't true or doesn't work, we have what it takes to alter our beliefs and responses. As we grow mentally, we can eventually develop the wisdom to see and respond to things as they truly are. This is what it takes to find your way out and never come back!

There may be many reasons for what we have done, then and now, but in the final count, we are where we are because of the choices we made and believe it or not, this Recovery Process is a wise choice.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT

1. Can you remember "one time" during the past 24 hours, that you weren't honest, you lied? Did you ever wonder why?
2. Does being open-minded to something positive (e.g. Recovery and Change of Lifestyle) frighten you? If so, why?
3. Having known the will-power you had living the destructive lifestyle, what can you or any one of us in this room do to assist you in shifting that same will-power towards achieving something positive in your Recovery?
4. Why couldn't you be honest in your past and what did you gain from being dishonest?

KEY WORDS DEFINED

HONESTY: Being honest, truthful, trustworthy, true to one's self.

OPEN-MINDED: With an open mind, unprejudiced, not set in any specific thought or way of thinking.

WILLING: Doing readily what is required, having no objection, given or performed willingly.

WILL-POWER: An intention or wish, determination, to influence or compel by doing this, to intend unconditionally.

A HELPFUL SUGGESTION: Be careful not to rely upon your own constitution or life history to define key words... Refer to a dictionary, because it may not be as selfish and will be more honest and accurate.

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THE LIFESTYLE ADDICTION TAKING IT PERSONAL

Each of us made a choice and decision to accept and adapt to a particular lifestyle. As a part of our lifestyles, we relied upon illegal activity to satisfy our wants, to bring us pleasure or to offer us some form of self-gratification. We did not understand it as an "addiction"; rather we justified it as a 'typical' way of life.

Addiction is simply a habit, which is a pattern of behavior that has become automatic. Addiction has three components that work in concert with each other, ultimately triggering a spontaneous action. Once the Cycle of Addiction starts, it is extremely difficult to stop until it has progressed to the point that we are out of control. Once we can understand how the Cycle of Addiction works, we have the ability to stop it before it starts its lethal rampage. The three components of the Cycle of Addiction are:

- ▶ **OBSESSION:** An obsession is a persistent, nagging idea, desire or emotional rush that unreasonably convinces a person they *can*, *should* or *need* to do something or have something.
- ▶ **COMPULSION:** Is the irresistible (most often a sudden/spontaneous response to an idea, desire or emotional rush) force to perform an irrational act that lacks good reason or clear understanding as to why we feel we have to do something or have something. Once we start, we keep repeating the act.
- ▶ **PROGRESSION:** Is a certain behavior or series of actions that continues to be repeated and the longer we repeat the act the worse the problem gets. Ultimately, the Cycle of Addiction continues out of control until it is stopped by the tragic consequences affecting the person and/or others.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. Can you identify a particular "Crime of Choice" that once you did it, you kept repeating until it led to more serious problems and consequences?
2. At some point, did you tell yourself or others that you could or would stop, but continued to justify doing some kind of wrong?
3. Is your lifestyle of the past, still the lifestyle you justify holding onto today?
4. Do you still find yourself struggling with 'bad habits' that cause you and others problems?
5. Can you give a reason why you have a serious need to change your lifestyle and respect the Cycle of Addiction for its strength and control?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

CYCLE: A course or series of events or operations that reoccur regularly and usually lead back to a starting point.

TRIGGER: Something that acts like a mechanical trigger in initiating a process or reaction.