

1-29-23



Reply: 24fv

Okay now, after studying Step Four and considering all the Questions To Be Honest About, its time to study Step Five and Step Six.

If there is no one trustworthy enough to expose your wrongs to, You may choose to write them out again (as in Step Four), addressed to your Higher Power (Good Orderly Direction), knowing you are free from the past Karma once you truly repent and decide to BE — in Recovery, which is Step Six.

Remember, you're not the only one who has taken the path of addiction ... nor the only one who has taken the path of recovery.

I've chosen the path of recovery and attest to the fact its possible to appreciate the serenity of sanity in sobriety.

Face Thee Well ~ For the Love of Truth. Remain Mindful that Obsession Compulsion Progression develops Beliefs Manners Habits associated with People Places Things which lead to Broken Relationships Irresponsibility Lack of Spiritual Principles.

Recovery is possible from all that. HOW? You must be Honest Openminded Willing

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STEP FIVE

WE SOUGHT FORGIVENESS FROM GOD, OURSELVES AND ADMITTED TO SOMEONE WE TRUSTED, THE WRONGS WE HAVE DONE.

Most of us come into Recovery lying for so long we actually believe our lies to be true. So it is difficult owning up to the truth, much less being asked to “admit” the truth openly. There is that old saying though, “The Truth Hurts.” The fact of the matter is, we all live with a lot of pain, anger and resentments toward others and ourselves. These ‘Truths’ still hurt within us. The poison needs to be released before the true healing can begin. We all rebel a bit at this point, making “good” excuses as to why we can’t trust someone else with our deepest, darkest secrets. If we freely selected some as our ‘sponsor/guide’, we obviously have a level of faith and respect for this person. So you cannot rightfully justify not trusting your sponsor. In truth, we actually don’t trust ourselves to be completely open and honest which is the real stumbling block. It is time to move forward by doing this Step. It’s about “seeking forgiveness” in this Step, not criticism or blame.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What are you afraid of in approaching this very important Step?
2. Do you believe that the truth can offer personal freedom?
3. Do you honestly have a problem trusting others or being trustworthy?
4. If your sponsor has not proven themselves to be untrustworthy, then what is the problem stopping you from going through with this Step?
5. What does this Step mean when it says to “...seek forgiveness...”?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

SEEK: To make a search or inquiry, to try to discover.

FORGIVENESS: To give up resentment or claim of requital for.

ADMIT: To make acknowledgement, to concede as true or valid.

TRUST: Reliance on the character, ability, strength or truth of another, To place confidence in.

SPONSOR: One who undertakes responsibility for another person’s spiritual welfare.

GUIDE: A person who, through suggestion, directs another’s conduct or course of life.

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WE SOUGHT FORGIVENESS FROM GOD, OURSELVES AND ADMITTED TO SOMEONE WE TRUSTED, THE WRONGS WE HAVE DONE.

Step Five isn't just reading Step Four; it's where the rubber meets the road. Admitting that we've done wrong is the true beginning of our Spiritual Growth. We may be afraid that we'll be rejected, we may still be trying to act tough by boasting about what we've done, or we may be hesitant to share 'secret' guilt or shame. If Step Four lit our inner room, Step Five opens the door: "I know I have problems, I believe I can change." By making the right decisions and working Step Five, we can decide to move into that process of change. It is a big and courageous step to admit that "I am wrong." No excuses, no defense, just vulnerable honesty. Yet, the admitting of our wrongs allows us to be free to choose another way of living.

Admitting our wrongs and resentments to our sponsor can give us the advantage of an objective viewpoint. Our sponsor can help us to see the things we don't want to or can't see and at the same time, support us by offering compassion, insight and understanding. Seeing patterns not noticeable to us and exposing habits and manners we don't recognize.

The Fifth Step requires trust, courage, self-honesty and commitment. We have to trust God, the process, ourselves and another person. We must have the courage to be honest about our fears, shame and transgressions and the honesty to face the truth about the harm and hurt we've caused and the damage we've done. Our lives have been disastrous and painful and we have avoided admitting that. We can't experience hope if we won't admit our despair. We have to face our feelings, especially the painful ones, if we are truly committed to change.

Step Five helps us to recognize and accept who we really are, no longer boasting about the wrongs we've done, but naming them as wrong so we can move on. We know we have been capable of doing great harm; believing we can change means that we can now do great good.

Our relationship with God, Ourselves and with Other People will begin to change with dedicated application of this Step.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. How can admitting the truth change your life?
2. How can practicing self-honesty help you?
3. What excuses, beliefs or fears could keep you from doing this Step?

(For those who have worked this Step before and are now in a position to assist others in their Recovery Process©)

4. How could your view of yourself change as a result of doing this Step?
5. Can you offer any suggestions to someone new to the Twelve Step Process?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

HUMILITY: Not proud or arrogant, ranking low in scale, offered in a spirit of submission.

PARADOX: Opposed to common sense and yet is perhaps true.

INSIGHT: Seeing the inner nature of a situation or event.

OBJECTIVE: Able to be seen by persons other than the one affected.

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STEP FIVE

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REVIEW

To admit something can be a very simple act, while understanding what we are making the admission for can be a very serious process. There are many factors to take into consideration when acknowledging our wrongs. Here are a short few:

1. What is my true intention?
2. What can be achieved?
3. What would the consequence be if I did not admit this?

Resentments can be a poison or a handicap to us, actually having no valid or appreciative qualities. In recovery, the genuine acknowledgement of our wrongs and understanding our resentments is very important. There cannot be any effective healing or Spiritual Growth without thoroughly addressing both of these crucial issues.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. Have you readily admitted to something without deep consideration to what you were really saying?
2. What does it mean for you to "understand" the wrongs you have done to others?
3. Explain the 'Healing' that comes from understanding wrongs and resentments.
4. What kind of on-going damage can resentments cause a person?
5. How do we grow spiritually by understanding our wrongs and resentments?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

APPRECIATIVE: Having or showing appreciation, an expression of admiration, approval or gratitude.

ACKNOWLEDGE: To recognize as genuine or valid, to express gratitude or obligation for, to make known the receipt of.

RESENTMENT: A feeling of indignant displeasure or persistent ill-will at something regarded as a wrong, insult or injury.

CONSEQUENCE: Something produced by a cause or necessarily following from a set of conditions, importance with respect to power to produce an effect.

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STEP FIVE

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EXPLORING THE PRINCIPLE OF TRUST

Trust is a very powerful principle with both advantages and disadvantages, since it involves a firm belief or confidence in the honesty, integrity, reliability and fairness of another person or thing. Trust is directly related to *faith* and *hope*. When trust is violated the effects can have destructive consequences, changing the course of how we live and be a determinative factor in whether or not we develop meaningful relationships. Trust can support us in being successful in achieving our goals. Trust is the foundation of good relationships, giving us the support necessary to have self-confidence in times of misfortune.

Trust is not only something we have for others. It is also important for us to trust ourselves. If we do not trust ourselves, we can hardly look to others to find us 'trustworthy'. We have to display a level of trustworthy-ness so that others can depend on us for support. We have to consistently be solid in our character, demeanor and action so that others can feel comfortable having confidence in us. Living in an honest, respectable manner will encourage others (and ourselves) to trust us. We have to keep our word and be true to ourselves and others.

There are many times, when in spite of our best efforts, we cannot overcome a difficult obstacle alone. These are moments of misfortune when things go wrong and we are left powerless to change a situation for ourselves or assist others. During these times, trust in God can be our best, reliable solution. It requires faith and hope to strengthen and maintain our trust in these situations. Our trust in God can renew our faith and hope that we can provide support and aid to those we want to help, even if we are 'merely' relying on the power of prayer.

Trust, in many different ways, will keep us moving forward with purpose and confidence, so we can turn the next corner, which is where our goals can be achieved and our hopes answered.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. How has your trust in someone else proved to be of benefit to you?
2. How do you feel, as a person, when others say that you are a trustworthy person?
3. How do you rate yourself as a trustworthy, responsible person?
4. How have you learned to overcome a traumatic experience that once affected (or still affects) your ability to trust? What have you done to make sure that bad experience did not become the only experience of your life?
5. Can you give an example of how "being trustworthy" has helped someone else to re-new their faith and hope?
6. Has your trust in God helped you to re-new your trust in other people or yourself?
7. How has your trust in God helped you to get through a bad 'storm' and ultimately lead you back onto the right path?

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The role of trust in the Sponsor/Sponsee relationship

In order to have a true working relationship with our sponsor, we need to first be honest with ourselves. Recovery is all about self-honesty. We have to be able to look at ourselves and accept the harsh truths that we may find there. One of those truths that we may find is that we need help. We got into trouble by doing things 'our' way, satisfying our own selfish wants and desires. For most of us, it is not in our nature to trust someone else or to expose our deepest thoughts or feelings. We may have to overcome the distrust and fear, that for self-preservation we built up over years, if we are going to seek help.

In recovery, we can find the help we need in a sponsor. We can share the personal stuff we have never shared before. We can talk about the everyday stuff we go through. A sponsor is more than this though. They are making a personal commitment to share and relate to us as well. Not only to build trust, but we will also find out that we share many problems with our sponsor. The honesty and trust that develops between a sponsor and sponsee is the basis of the path to true recovery. A sponsor keeps the chain of recovery whole as it passes through them on to others.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What is holding you back from seeking a sponsor?
2. How serious are you about seeking recovery to obtain a better life?
3. Have you ever really taken a hard, truthful look at yourself?
4. Do you think you need a sponsor? If not, why not?
5. How is your communication and honesty with your sponsor?
6. When you sought a sponsor, how large a role did trust and honesty play in your decision?
What was the criteria you used in making your choice?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

TRUST: Assured reliance on the character, ability, strength or truth of someone or something, to commit or place in one's care or keeping, to place confidence in.

HONESTY: Free from fraud or deception, fairness or straightforwardness of conduct, adherence to the facts, implies a refusal to lie, steal or deceive in any way.

SPONSOR: A person who undertakes certain responsibilities in connection with some other person or group or activities, as in being a proponent, endorser, advisor, etc... is one who assumes a certain degree of responsibility for another in any of various ways.

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STEP SIX

WE MADE A PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO ABANDON "OUR" DEFECTS OF CHARACTER TO PRACTICE DECENT REASONABLE CONDUCT THROUGH DAILY ACTIONS AND BEHAVIOR

UNDERSTANDING "DEFECTS OF CHARACTER" AND THE SERIOUS NEED TO CHANGE THEM

An important key rule toward achieving effective recovery is to "keep the process simple". We have been frustrated enough by our complicated lives, the result of which has labeled us as outcasts. We have isolated ourselves as Criminals or Gangmembers through misconceptions that we are different from 'normal' people. Once we truly understand "defects of character" we realize the basic flaws in the human character and the emotional instability we need to learn how to balance at any given moment of any day. In coming to understand our defects of character, we are simply acknowledging our "imperfections". Once we accept our flaws, we awaken to the fact that life is not the way we expect and our attitude will make things better or worse.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. Do you make things complicated or keep things simple?
2. What are three consistent defects you see in your character or behavior?
3. What role do emotions have in developing defects?
4. How do we get rid of defects/
5. Please explain the process of working through defects in character.

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

Defect: An imperfection that impairs worth or utility, a shortcoming, a lack of something necessary for completeness, inadequacy.

CHARACTER: One of the attributes or features that make up and distinguish an individual, the complex of mental and ethical traits making and often individualizing a person.

ATTITUDE: A position assumed for a specific purpose, a feeling or emotion toward a fact or state.

IMPERFECT: Not perfect, defective.

COMPLICATED: Difficult to analyze, understand or explain.

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STEP SIX

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Defects in character are common among us.
Some of the most consistent, common defects are:

Insecurity: Which can trigger other defects like low self-esteem or a lack of self-confidence.

Dishonesty: This can cause us to become aggressive and irresponsible.

Fear: Fear can be a major defect in our lives. It is a defect that is a part of our justification for other's behaviors or attitudes. It can cause us to manipulate others, be egocentric, become aggressive or be consumed by self-pity.

Prejudice: prejudices are dangerous because anything within human behavior that does not function normally can be considered defective. Once reduced or replaced with something good or decent, the character can then function normally, at peace, without conflict.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What made or makes you uncomfortable around other people?
2. How does/did insecurity play a role in your being dishonest or irresponsible?
3. Today, can you see the things that made/make you insecure or lack self-confidence?
4. How many of your relationships have been based on lies?
5. Do you have a hard time being honest with those you love today?
6. How often are/were things centered around you and your wants/needs?
7. How many people are or have been affected by your selfishness?
8. How many times do you put things off or make excuses why you won't do something.
9. How have you been affected by your own irresponsibility?
10. Do you still have a problem with irresponsibility today?
11. Do you get angry easily or often?
12. While angry, do you often say or do things you later regret?
13. How many times have you hurt yourself or others because of your aggressiveness or violence?
14. Where does your anger come from?

**IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER DEFECTS THAT YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT
PLEASE DO SO.**

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We are imperfect people who have the same problems as any other normal person. When something is 'defective' this means it is not 'functioning' normally. Anything can be 'defective,' including us. When something is not functioning normally, the problem must be identified, then corrected. The Fourth and Fifth Steps identified what is defective in our character. Those defects, which are not normal behavior, cause us to not function as normal people do. For example; it's not normal behavior to lie constantly. It is not normal to stay angry and rely upon violence to resolve problems. It is not normal behavior to be irresponsible or lazy. Once we change these things that are not considered normal, we can function as people do in the community. Defects are dangerous when we make excuses to not change. Change is most often difficult because we refuse to do so.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. If you do not like being lied to, why are you dishonest?
2. Do you expect others to do things for you and when they don't, do you get upset? If so, please explain why and listen to what you say.
3. When you get angry, why is violence an option for you?
4. Do you pass judgment on others, criticizing them more than you examine your own faults?
5. Honestly, what problems or bad habits do you have and simply make excuses to avoid changing?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

COMMITMENT: An agreement or pledge to do something in the future.

DEFECT: An imperfection that impairs worth or utility.

CHARACTER: Marked by notable or conspicuous traits.

PRACTICE: To do or perform often, customarily or habitually.

DECENT: Conforming to standards of propriety, good taste or morality.

CONDUCT: To behave in a particular and especially controlled manner.

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WE MADE A PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO ABANDON "OUR" DEFECTS OF CHARACTER TO PRACTICE DECENT REASONABLE CONDUCT THROUGH DAILY ACTIONS AND BEHAVIOR

Following our Fourth and Fifth Step experiences we should be able to clearly identify and understand how our own 'Defects in Character' are the '*fueling force*' that turns on the '*Cycle Of Addiction*'. Knowing these defects are so dangerous is what tells us to take This Step very serious. Defects are normal, ingrained in our human character if they weren't, we would not be *imperfect*. Our defects are dangerous when they "flare" up outside the range of "Normal Behavior" which in turn justifies us to rely upon our choice of addiction to bring us pleasure or self-gratification. We find that behind each of our wrongdoings there were defects flaring out of control. Now, that we know what these defects are specifically - and we now know for a fact that these 'defective words' are actually "*Living Conduct and Actions*" we have serious reasons to stop maintaining the practice or use of them. When we withdraw from using these 'Defects in Character' our behaviors return to a normal range of acceptance or tolerance to fit within normal standards.

When our defects flare, it is our responsibility to recognize them at work and to then change our attitude, conduct or actions. When we do, we then automatically calm down and can return to feeling normal.

It is important to remember that Step Six is a Step to take "Personal", which means that we are responsible and accountable to ourselves. We should not attempt to impress others, nor change for anyone but ourselves. It is our personal recovery at stake here, we must take and keep the commitment to "BE TRUE TO OURSELVES". When we change our attitude, conduct and actions, we feel better and our relationships with others and with God, automatically improve.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. Can you share one of your defects with the group? If so, then do so...
2. What is the most damaging 'Defect Of Character' you have? When did it surface, how does it manifest in your daily life?
3. Which of your Defects Of Character have been pointed out to you by those you love or who love you (Parents, Siblings, Wife/Husband, Children)?
4. Which of your Defects Of Character could you put aside RIGHT NOW - TODAY and know that you have the ability to not engage in that way of thinking or behavior ever again?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

DISHONEST: Not honest, lying, cheating, deceiving, stealing.

SELFISH: Seeking or concentrating on one's own advantage, pleasure or well-being without regard for others.

SELF-CENTERED: Concerned solely with one's own desires, needs or interests.

MANIPULATIVE: To manage or control artfully or by shrewd use of influence, often in an unfair or fraudulent way.

INSECURE: Not secure, not safe from danger, filled with anxieties, apprehensive, not firm or dependable, unreliable.

INADEQUATE: Not good enough for what is required or needed, insufficient, not suitable, not satisfactory.

AGGRESSIVE: Ready or willing to take issue or engage in direct action, starting fights or quarrels.

DECEPTIVE: Deliberate misrepresentation of the facts by word, action, manner, etc...

DEFIANT: The act of defying, open and/or bold resistance to authority, opposition.

IRRESPONSIBLE: Not liable to be called to account for one's actions, lacking a sense of responsibility.

RESENTFUL: Feeling or showing resentment, a feeling of displeasure and indignation from a sense of being injured or offended.

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STEP SIX

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-Have you ever asked yourself-

"Where do my defects of character come from? How are they caused?"

Defects of Character are ingrained no less than Spiritual Principals of good are. God has given us the free-will capacity to make choices and decisions between good and evil. From birth our characters have been affected and infected by beliefs, influences, experiences, what we have been taught and what we have observed do or say. Then we too developed warped beliefs and bad habits according to a standard we felt fit our needs. But still, we are sensitive, emotional people that have difficulty understanding our own feelings. The more we take a look at our past experiences and how they affected us, the better understanding we will have of how we feel and how we react today.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What caused you to become prejudice towards certain people?
2. Looking back at your life, where did the anger, selfishness and/or dishonesty come from?
3. Growing up, what did you experience that had an impact on the way you felt about yourself or others?
4. How did you develop your warped beliefs and bad habits?
5. What are some warped beliefs and bad habits you passed on to others, that you now realize are harmful?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

EXPERIENCES: A particular instance of personally encountering or undergoing something, the process or fact of personally observing, encountering or undergoing something.

INFLUENCE: The capacity or power to produce effects on others by intangible or indirect means.

BELIEFS: Something believed, an opinion or conviction, confidence in the truth or existence of something not immediately susceptible to rigorous proof, confidence, faith, or trust.

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STEP SIX

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

Listed below are some Character Defects as well as some Character Assets/Spiritual Principals. Using examples from your own past, identify a Character Defect, and talk about how you have or can replace (d) it with a Character Asset or Spiritual Principal.

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
Gossip	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 PRINCIPALS

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		

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TOPIC

SELF-ESTEEM

A POSITIVE PERCEPTION OF SELF

When looking at our lives and the destructive things we have done, it is difficult to see ourselves as good or decent people. Our “perception of ourselves” was negative, based in the destructive lifestyle we were caught up in. Believing we could rise above or escape the clutches of a destructive lifestyle was nothing more than a dream.

In CGA we begin to learn about the problem (The Lifestyle Addiction) that exists in our lives and that ‘Change **IS** Possible’ in CGA.

Change begins in our lives as we journey through the CGA Twelve Steps under the guidance of an experienced sponsor. We learn we can change past negative behaviors and live better today. As we practice exchanging our past negative actions for new spiritual ones, we begin to gain a positive perception of ourselves – we begin to see our lives as decent, good and meaningful.

Each Step is a building block for laying a new, positive foundation for living our lives. We get to see and hear others in CGA share their experiences, strengths and hopes. Which Steps have helped them to deal with everyday life issues and how they did so. As well as how their perception of themselves is changing to one of decency and renewed purpose in their lives.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What was your perception of yourself when you first came to a CGA meeting?
2. How is your perception of yourself today?
3. How have the CGA Twelve Steps helped you improve your perception of yourself?
4. How important is self-esteem in the decisions you make on a moment-to-moment basis?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

PERCEPTION: The act, process or result of perceiving. The ability to perceive. Understanding or insight.

RENEW: To make new or as if new again, to restore. To take up once more, to resume.

PURPOSE: An intended or desired result, a goal. Determination or resolve.

DECENCY: Marked by conformity to recognized standards of propriety or morality. Meeting acceptable standards. Adequate.