

# *Big Book Sponsorship*

## STEP ONE

**How to effectively tell your "WAR" story**



***Our job is to explain our approach and win their (newcomers) confidence.***

But the ex-problem drinker (*addict*) who has found this solution (*our recipe for recovery*), who is properly armed with facts about them self, can generally win the entire confidence of another alcoholic (*addict*) in a few hours. Until such an understanding is reached, little or nothing can be accomplished. That the *person* who is making the approach has had the same difficulty (*lack of control*), that *they* obviously know what *they are* talking about, that *their* whole department shouts at the new prospect that *they are a person* with a real answer...(AA p. 18-19)

Tell *them (newcomers)* enough about your drinking (*using, acting-out*) habits, symptoms, and experiences to encourage *them* to speak of themselves. (AA p. 91) Tell *them* how baffled you were, how you finally learned that you were sick. Give *them* an account of the struggles (*your failed strategies*) you made to stop. Show *them* how the mental twist (*how the liar inside my head always wins*) which leads to the first drink (*toke, hit, puff, line, etc.*) of the spree. (AA p. 92).

We, in our turn, sought the same escape with all the desperation of a drowning *person*. (AA p. 28). (*Are you desperate - yes-no?*) The more hopeless *they feel (prospects, newcomers)*, the better. *They* will be more likely to follow your suggestions. (AA p. 94) *Introduce the newcomer to the Log & Loser List*

### ***Self-Diagnosis***

Men and women drink (*use or act-out*) essentially because they like the effect (*body allergy*) produced by alcohol (*drugs, obsessive-compulsive behaviour*) (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*). The sensation is so elusive that, while they admit it is injurious (*yes-no?*) (*When in doubt, see your loser list*), they cannot after a time differentiate the true from the false (*I'm a liar*). To them, their alcoholic (*addict*) life seems the only normal one. They are restless, irritable and discontented, *bored, depressed, anxious*, unless they can again experience the sense of ease and comfort (*body allergy*) which comes at once by taking a few drinks--drinks (*hits, puffs, bites, bets, acts, cuts, thoughts, etc.*) which they see others taking (*doing*) with impunity. After they have succumbed to the desire again, as so many do (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*), and the phenomenon of craving (*body allergy*) develops, they pass through the well-known stages of a spree, emerging remorseful, with a firm resolution (*log*) not to drink (*use or act-out*) again (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*) This is repeated over and over (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*), and

unless this person can experience an entire psychic change there is very little hope of their recovery  
(*When in doubt, see your log list*). (AA. p. xxviii 4th ed.)

**Moderate drinkers (users, thinkers)** have little trouble in giving up liquor (*drugs, acting-out*) entirely if they have good reason (*log*) for it. (*Do you have a good reason for stopping - yes-no?*) They can take it or leave it alone. (*Can you take it or leave it alone- yes-no?*). Note: *If your answered NO, than you are NOT a moderate drinker/user.*

Then we have a certain type of **hard drinkers) (heavy users, thinkers)**. They may have the habit badly enough to gradually impair *them* physically and mentally. It may cause *them* to die a few years before *their* time. If a sufficiently strong reason: **ill health** (*log*) (*Has being sick ever caused you to stop for good - yes-no?*), **falling in love** (*log*) (*Can you stop for the sake of your spouse, family, friends - yes-no?*), **change of environment** (*log*) (*Has moving away or avoiding triggers worked for you - yes-no?*), or the **warning of a doctor, lawyer, judge, therapist, employer** (*log*) (*Has your doctor's advice to stop ever worked for you - yes-no?*) becomes operative, this *person* can also stop or moderate (*Is this you - yes-no?*), although *they* may find it difficult and troublesome and may even need medical attention. (*detox, treatment, therapy, counseling logs*). (AA p. 20-21) Note: *If you answered NO, then you are NOT a hard drinker/heavy user, but the liar wants to convince you that you are just a hard drinker/heavy user.*

**But what about the real alcoholic (addict)** ...at some stage of *their* drinking (*using or acting-out*) career *they* begin to lose all control of *their* liquor (*drug*) consumption (or acting-out behaviour), once *they* start to drink (*use, act-out*). (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*) (*When in doubt, see your log and loser list*) (AA p. 21)

The fact is that most alcoholics (*addicts*), for reasons yet obscure, have lost the power of choice in drink (*drugs, obsessive-compulsive behaviours*) (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*). Our so called will power (*log*) becomes practically nonexistent (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*). We are unable, at certain times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory ("*remember when.*" "*think, think, think,*" "*play the tape all the way through*" *log*) of the suffering and humiliation (*log*) of even a week or a month ago (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*). We are without defense against the first drink (*drug, obsessive compulsive act*) (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*). (AA p. 24) Note: *The liar always wins!*

No person likes to think *they are* bodily and mentally different from *their* fellows. Therefore, it is not surprising that our drinking (*using, acting out*) careers have been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove we could drink (*use, act-out*) like other people. (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*) The idea that somehow, someday *they* will control and enjoy *their* drinking (*using, acting out behavior*) is the great obsession of every abnormal drinker (*user, obsessive-compulsive*). (*Is this you - yes-no?*) The persistence of this illusion (*lie*) is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of insanity or death (*My future as a big loser.*) (*When in doubt, see your loser list*). (AA p. 30)

We alcoholics (*addicts*) are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking (*using, acting-out behaviour*). (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*) We know that no real alcoholic (*addict*) ever recovers control. All of us felt at times that we were regaining control, but such intervals usually brief were inevitably followed by still less control, which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization (*log*). (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*) We are convinced to a *person* that alcoholics (*addicts*) of our type are in the grip of a progressive illness. Over any considerable period we get worse, never better. (*Is this your experience - yes-no?*) (AA p. 30) *Note: When my body heals, the liar returns and tells me I can safely drink and use again.*

If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely (*Do you honestly want to stop - yes-no? and, based on your experience, have you been able to stay stopped - yes-no?*) (*When in doubt, see your log list*), or if when drinking (*using or acting out*), you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic (*addict*) (*Do you exhibit little control, when drinking, using or acting out - yes-no?*). If that be the case, you may be suffering from an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer. (AA p. 44)

This is by no means a comprehensive picture of the true alcoholic (*addict*), as our behavior patterns vary. But this description should identify *them* roughly. (*yes-no?*) (*When in doubt, see your log and loser list*) (AA p. 22)

**Step 1 Instruction: We admitted we were powerless** (*When in doubt, see your log list*) **over alcohol** (*drugs, acting-out behaviour*), **that our lives had become unmanageable** (*When in doubt, see your loser list*).

We learned that we had to fully concede (*admit*) to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics (*addicts*). (*Do you admit it - yes-no?*) This is the first step in recovery. The delusion (*lie*) that we are like other people (*moderate/heavy drinkers/users*), or presently may be, has to be smashed. (*Are you convinced that you are a real alcoholic/addict - yes-no?*) (AA p. 30).

*If you answered yes, then you have taken step one! You are now properly armed with the facts about your self! HOWEVER, the BAD NEWS is, 1) you're a real addict. 2) You're a loser and 3) You're a walking deadperson.*

*The GOOD NEWS is... **There is a solution...***

If you are as seriously alcoholic (*addicted*) as we were, we believe there is no middle-of-the-road solution (*logs*). We were in a position where life was becoming impossible (*Is life becoming impossible? yes-no?*) (*When in doubt, see your loser list*), and if we had passed into the region from which there is no return through human aid (*When in doubt, see your log list*), we had but two alternatives: One was to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best we could; and the other, to accept spiritual help (*Are you ready to accept spiritual help - yes-no?*). This we did because we honestly wanted to, and were willing to make the effort (AA p. 25-26). (*Are you willing to make the effort - yes-no?*)

...and strange as this may seem to those who do not understand—once a psychic change has occurred, the very same person who seemed doomed (*a loser*), who had so many problems *they* despaired of ever solving them, suddenly finds *themselves* easily able to control *their* desire for alcohol (*drugs, acting-out behaviour*), the only effort necessary being that required to follow a few simple rules (*our recipe*). (AA. p. xxix 4th ed.)

We hope no one will consider these self-revealing accounts in bad taste. Our hope is that many alcoholic men and women, desperately in need, will see these pages, and we believe that it is only by fully disclosing ourselves and our problems that they will be persuaded to say, "Yes, I am one of them too; I must have this thing." (AA p. 29)

What seemed at first a flimsy reed (*not a log*), has proved to be the loving and powerful hand of God. A new life has been given us or, if you prefer, "a design for living" that really works. (AA p.28)

*Addicts are like drowning men and women. If we don't find some way of keeping our heads above water, we are going to drown. So we look for some kind of power to keep us afloat. We notice some logs floating on the surface. These logs look like they're capable of keeping our heads above water, but when we reach for one of these logs we find that we can only hold on for maybe a day, a week, a month, a year, but at some point, the log fails us as a power and we slip and drown. Logs are best described as "easier softer ways," "middle of the road solutions," and "human aid."*

**Step One (Part One): Powerlessness: My Log List - my failed strategies for recovery**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> will power  | <input type="checkbox"/> getting pregnant   | <input type="checkbox"/> reputation   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> resolutions, oaths, promises, contracts                 | <input type="checkbox"/> getting a pet (dog, cat)   | <input type="checkbox"/> memory strategies<br><i>"remember when," "think, think, think," "play the tape "</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> controlled using, drinking                              | <input type="checkbox"/> church & prayer (faith without works)  | <input type="checkbox"/> jail, incarceration  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> harm reduction  | <input type="checkbox"/> having a sponsor   | <input type="checkbox"/> good reasons to stop   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> substitution strategies                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> going to meetings  | <input type="checkbox"/> consequences   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ill health, sickness                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> 90 meetings in 90 days   | <input type="checkbox"/> moral & philosophical convictions  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ominous warnings from a doctor, judge, lawyer, employer | <input type="checkbox"/> yesterday's spiritual experience   | <input type="checkbox"/> suffering and humiliation  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> change of environment                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> behavioural modification   | <input type="checkbox"/> pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> trigger lists   | <input type="checkbox"/> self-help books  | <input type="checkbox"/> sobriety time  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> avoiding people, places, things                         | <input type="checkbox"/> personal development courses   | <input type="checkbox"/> holistic medicine,<br><i>acupuncture, hypnotism</i>                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> counselling/therapy                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> recovery knowledge   | <input type="checkbox"/> reading the "Big Book"   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> group therapy   | <input type="checkbox"/> intelligence / education   | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> detox   | <input type="checkbox"/> frothy emotional appeals   | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> treatment centres                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> interventions  | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> spas/retreats   | <input type="checkbox"/> positive thinking  | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> war stories   | <input type="checkbox"/> reading poetry, <i>"Yesterday, Today &amp; Tomorrow", "The Man In the Glass"</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fear  | <input type="checkbox"/> exercise   | <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> great sex / no sex                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> guilt, remorse, shame  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> money / no money  | <input type="checkbox"/> good days/bad days   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> relationships, <i>friends, spouse, children, family</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> staying busy   |   |

**Step One (Part 2) Unmanageability: My Loser List - what I've lost as a result of my addiction**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> time                            | <input type="checkbox"/> education                 | <input type="checkbox"/> volition & agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> family                          | <input type="checkbox"/> quality of life           | <input type="checkbox"/> reputation        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> spouse                          | <input type="checkbox"/> hope                      | <input type="checkbox"/> freedom           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> children                        | <input type="checkbox"/> intelligence              | <input type="checkbox"/> morality          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> friends                         | <input type="checkbox"/> mental acuity             | <input type="checkbox"/> spirituality      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> money                           | <input type="checkbox"/> family time               | <input type="checkbox"/> peace of mind     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> home / residence                | <input type="checkbox"/> self-respect              | <input type="checkbox"/> sanity            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> health                          | <input type="checkbox"/> respect from others       | <input type="checkbox"/> faith / god       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> safety                          | <input type="checkbox"/> self-esteem               | <input type="checkbox"/> humanity          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hygiene                         | <input type="checkbox"/> self-confidence           | <input type="checkbox"/> _____             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> opportunities                   | <input type="checkbox"/> self improvement          | <input type="checkbox"/> _____             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> careers                         | <input type="checkbox"/> self control              | <input type="checkbox"/> _____             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> jobs/employment                 | <input type="checkbox"/> emotional security        | <input type="checkbox"/> _____             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> licence (vehicle, professional) | <input type="checkbox"/> responsibility for myself | <input type="checkbox"/> _____             |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> responsibility to others  |  |