



SAL First Step Inventory

“Who cares to admit complete defeat? Practically no one, of course. Every natural instinct cries out against the idea of personal powerlessness. It is truly awful to admit that, glass in hand (lust; using porn, masturbating, adult establishments, prostitutes etc.), we have warped our minds into such an obsession for destructive drinking (practicing the actions, attitudes and acting out behaviors of lust) that only an act of Providence can remove it from us.” Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions p.21

Step One “We admitted that we were powerless over lust – that our lives had become unmanageable.”

It is of utmost importance to know that one will not be successful in living in recovery until there is complete admission of powerlessness over the addiction. Those who are not desperate for recovery may try to stop without grasping that life has become truly unmanageable. This lack of admission will ultimately lead to relapse and increased feelings of hopelessness. Thus, little is gained in the work of recovery until a person who has allowed lust to become an obsession and compulsion accepts his or her “*devastating weakness and all its consequences*”.

Part of working Step One is doing a *First Step Inventory* with a sponsor and a small select group of trusted individuals who have worked their own First Step, and who have a comfortable length of sobriety. For several reasons; especially for safety, it is not appropriate that a First Step Inventory be given to the entire SAL Group.

The purpose of a First Step Inventory

First Step Inventory - an opportunity to gain a recognition and publicly acknowledge powerlessness, unmanageability and sexual addiction in one’s life. This is accomplished in a safe environment with those who can be trusted with deeply personal spiritual experiences.

Prepare the inventory with input from a sponsor, therapist if possible, and the White Book, Step Into Action, 12 and 12, and Big Book. Make a complete inventory excluding nothing. Please be aware that giving graphic details of one’s acting-out behaviors is not necessary or appropriate. However, it is essential that one does not minimize, excuse or take a victim approach when giving the inventory. All behaviors need to be acknowledged. Omitting aspects of behavior, unmanageability, or consequences because of shame or fear will only leave one feeling greater shame. Taking full responsibility for one’s actions, attitudes and behaviors is vital.

Preparing a First Step Inventory

1. Go over with sponsor and therapist for input, to fine-tune and minimize triggers for others before sharing with the group.

2. Invite several trusted people to hear your inventory. This presentation should be in a separate and safe space from the regular group meeting.
 - *For in-person meetings, can be done before/after meeting or on separate day
 - *For online meetings, can be done via personal Zoom account or phone call
3. Sponsor leads the meeting and someone opens with prayer.
4. Sponsor and others attending **briefly** share their stories.
5. The individual shares his inventory.
6. People in attendance make brief supportive comments and reinforce that living in recovery is possible.
7. Final thoughts or closing remarks from person giving First Step.
8. Closing Prayer

What is the difference between a First Step, Recovery Sharing with the entire SAL group, and a Fourth Step Inventory?

A First Step is for us to acknowledge and recognize our powerlessness and unmanageability of our addiction by listing and sharing our history of acting out behaviors, actions and consequences.

A Fourth Step is a moral inventory where we go beyond our actions and look at the why. This cannot be done until we have gone through Steps 2 and 3 for the support they bring.

Recovery Sharing to the entire SAL Group

It is appropriate for a person who has given their First Step Inventory to take the opportunity to do Recovery Sharing of their story with their home SAL group. This is different from a First Step Inventory in that behaviors and unmanageability are shared with the group but with less detail than a First Step Inventory and with an added dimension of a commitment to the work of recovery. It is good to share the feelings of hopelessness that existed before working recovery and the great hope that has come from total honesty working recovery with others of a like mind. It is appropriate to take 15 to 20 minutes of meeting time during the Step Study portions of the meeting to present one's story in a Recovery Sharing format. Recovery Sharing is best done in a story format of experiences, unmanageability, consequences and most importantly hope for recovery through working the Twelve Steps and God's grace.

Working the Fourth Step

A Fourth Step is a moral inventory where we go beyond our actions and look at how our natural desires have become warped. "Every time a person imposes his instincts unreasonably upon others, unhappiness follows. Instinct run wild... is the underlying cause of their (destructive) behavior" p. 44 *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*

Note: This cannot be done until we have gone through Steps 2 and 3 for the support they bring.