

The Experience of Commitment the Step Group Form

This form of self-survey is not simply the recording of the events of our past. The purpose of the Step Group Form is a re-investigation of the events of our past along with a self examination, which observes the point of view that governs our behavior. Our point of view is an old, substantial habit which can be the origin of all of our limitations and the type of problems that we make for ourselves.

Particular to this form of self-survey is *the Framework*. *The Framework* specifies that we write five to seven days a week, not more than an hour or less than a half hour a day. As part of this method we become accustomed to renewing our commitment to write on a weekly basis. How we function with our commitment plays an intricate part in revealing how we create unnecessary problems in our life.

The problem is that no one is used to viewing commitment in that way. 'Commitment,' when it is narrowly viewed in the context of reward or blame, is an opportunity lost. For purposes of observing, in this form of self-survey our commitment is held without judgment. Without blame, shame, guilt or credit attached to our commitment, our weekly commitment can provide keen insight into our every day behavior.

The way that it works is that we use the unique style of writing in the Step Group Form to take a look at how we alter *the Framework*. We look at how it is we did not keep our commitment by making that moment into an event. We do this without blaming or shaming ourselves, or even crediting ourselves about our commitments.

Every time we alter or do not keep our commitment in life it makes a direct impression on us. During the Step Group Form we focus upon what we did with our commitment. We pay particular attention to how we think, i.e., our justifications, reasoning and excuses.

There is no judgment or right or wrong in the commitment process. When we do not keep our commitment, we simply focus back upon the moment during the week that it came up to act upon our commitment and we did not do it. We then make that moment into an event the next time we write noticing in particular the thoughts that stopped us.

When written down, we can see the constant repetition of similar thoughts

regarding everything in our life. After a while, we begin to be suspicious of the validity of these thoughts, even though they *seem* to be true. This is noticing our point of view.

Life goes on outside of our point of view. It is thinking that unconsciously limits us. Thinking causes the types of problems that are unnecessary in life. When we tell ourselves “What’s the use,” or “Why bother, nothing works for me anyhow,” or, “What’s the point,” we can begin to see our thoughts as our own particular brand of distorted reality.

If our excuses involve others, writing these incidents down can offer to us the exact origin of our difficulties in relationship. In fact, we can see the problem point of view regarding all the major areas of life, i.e., self-esteem, sex, security and addiction and compulsion.

Just to bring forth opportunities to discover the point of view in this important area of relationship, some writers extend their commitment to other things as well. They use support telephone calls to see their point of view regarding people.

This 4th Step¹ is an inventory of our past; therefore, the only time we write about a current moment is when we do not keep our commitment, or when something happens in our life that we cannot get it off our mind. The cut-off date for writing current events is one month prior to the beginning of the writing of the inventory itself. Nothing more current than one month prior to the start ever needs to be written, other than those circumstances listed above.

One of the traps people fall into is trying to make a commitment from their intellect. An example of a commitment made from the head is all about time limitations, not being able to succeed, good and bad, and comfortable vs. not comfortable.

The writing commitment ought always come from the heart. In order to make our commitment reflect honestly what we intend to do, we sometimes need to recall the first moment we wanted to do the Step Group Form capturing the enthusiasm and determination first experienced for the writing.

Some folks keep their commitment week after week without fail. They do the writing perfectly. After writing for a while they notice they do everything in life perfectly. They keep an appointment to the minute. They call when they say they are going to call. Because this is an opportunity to find out what point of view

¹The Twelve Steps are listed in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, first edition, p. 71, 72.

governs our behavior, the perfect writer can benefit as well if they will notice the 'drive' behind this perfection. Then they can notice this 'drive' as a consequence of particular thinking. In noticing what this does to them, they may find freedom.

We always encourage an increase or alteration of commitment beyond what one has done consistently for six weeks because a comfortable level of commitment does not allow us to see our self. We always keep the commitment within *the Framework*

If we use commitment to stir thinking, it has enormous utility. The point of view we discover during our 4th Step strives for comfort and ease. The reason for pushing beyond this tendency to remain comfortable is to create yet another opportunity to view limited identities, thoughts and behaviors.

Even the mention of a change in writing commitment will stir some kind of thought. If we are looking for it, we will see our point of view. We will see our attitude. We make *that moment* into an event. We have found that stretching ourselves beyond this *deadened* level of comfort always reveals problem thinking to us. For those who are doing the maximum and keeping their commitment every week, we ask them to reduce their commitment in order to make this change.

If a person does not get anything else out of this practice, ***develop the ability to see yourself.*** The result we have experienced from this style of writing is the freedom to view our self in the moments of our life and to choose the best we can imagine. It is a lasting gift of this writing. The freedom to choose the best that we can be and knowing the best we can be is who we really are. That is the beginning of a new way of life.

Our commitment as a group in sharing the Step Group Form is that ***no one find the Twelve Steps, walk away and die.*** They can find the life-transforming miracle they are looking for through the beauty of the Twelve Steps. This is the principle the International Step Foundation stands upon as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) public educational charity.

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