

Step 9 AA Worksheet

The 9th step is the most fearsome of the steps of A.A. and always terrifies people. **It does not become easier but can become more manageable if a worksheet is used.** The worksheet does, however, need to be a bit more than a simple checklist format. This article looks at such a 9th step worksheet and how it can be used. **It can be considered the workbook companion.**

Performing the Ninth Step

In the 8th step, the alcoholic undertakes to “make a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.” **And now the alcoholic is ready to take positive actions to rid themselves of the baggage of the past.**

Coming into the 9th step, there should be a comprehensive list of all persons we hurt in any way, and we **should be willing to resolve any issues that have been noted in that list.**

The Ninth Step Worksheet

Below is the worksheet with some fictitious examples of entries,

Alcoholics Anonymous Ninth Step Worksheet				
Step 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.				
Person	Event	Emotions/Motivators	Make Amends?	Comments
Frank	Fight over his girlfriend. This became a physical altercation.	Mine: Jealousy His: Rage	Yes	I still resent the fact that I lost the brawl.
Celeste	An argument over dividing fence	Mine: Irritation and needing a victim Hers: Uncertain	No	It will hurt the relationship with her husband if he finds out that he was lied to about the argument,

Bill	Stole \$110	Mine: Need to drink	No	Can't repay it.
Bill	An argument over him not lending me money.	Mine: Anger. I needed to drink Bill: Not prepared to enable my drinking	Yes	Let him know that I appreciate that he had my back. Apologize for resentment.
Mike	An incident regarding Mike telling management I was drunk	Mine: Resentment, anger, and bitterness Mike: Resentment at my success on the sales floor	Yes	I need to forgive Mike. Mike is a very difficult person more so since his accident. Will likely not respond well.

p Worksheet Sample. One is highlighted as it will be referred to later.

The worksheet has three purposes. These are to

- **Record**

Make a note of each person harmed and **each incident in which they were hurt.**

- **Reflect**

To consider in-depth **why each of these things happened.** Reflection helps keep the list honest.

- **Plan**

To work out **how to approach each person and what to say.**

Explanations and thoughts about each of the five columns is given below.

Person (Who)

This is straightforward. Names from the step eight list can be transferred here. It is a list of people who have **suffered past wrongs at the hands of the alcoholic before they achieved sobriety and for which they now take personal responsibility.**

In completing the worksheet nothing can be ignored or overlooked. This list will quite likely contain a lot of people, but they need to be there. One **purpose of step 9 is to restore healthy relationships** and for this reason, everything must be considered.

One important thing to note here is that this should not become a grudge list. Approach this list with the right attitude and with daily prayer.

Event (What/When)

The event is an incident that needs to be resolved. It is when and what the past actions were. This is an interesting exercise. **How trivial must an incident be to be excluded?** That is for the person filling out this worksheet, in conjunction with their sponsor, to decide. I would suggest though that if it plays on the mind of someone doing this step, then it should be recorded in this list.

Add as much or as little detail as needed here to ensure that you have as full a picture as possible of the affair in question. Over time details can become hazy, but the more vividly it can be recalled, the better it can be understood.

Each of these occurrences will be a reflection on the exact nature of our wrongs and show our defects of character.

Emotions/Motivators (Why)

This column has two purposes. The first is for the now sober alcoholic to record their feelings during the event. From the perspective of the alcoholic, **this refers mainly to the defects of character** that were uncovered during the fearless moral inventory of the 4th step and that triggered this event.

These are recorded so the feelings and thoughts about the incident are noted. When a long time has passed since the incident, **it is quite possible that the emotions and causes of the incident may be forgotten.** That doesn't matter. Like all the steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, there is time for reflection and the Higher Power can be called on to help people recall to the best of their ability.

It also allows the feelings of the other person to be noted. Perhaps the opinion is wrong, but it is an exercise in the awareness of other people and is probably right. **Nonetheless, considering this will provide some sort of idea of what might be in store when dealing with this person.**

It is a good idea not to rush this portion as you fill out each incident. Personal relationships are complex and **slow contemplation can lead to sudden awakenings**, to aha moments – this is how Sandra must have felt! Keep an open mind when considering the factors involved here and pray for the tolerance of others/

Make Amends?

The member of alcoholics anonymous does not want to cause further injury when conducting this step. This column is simply a checkbox. Yes or no. Should an effort to make amends be made? **So, it turns out the answer may be wrong.** We may hide from our fears

by electing not to make amends. Catching this particular error is a crucial possibility that the comments column can be used for.

It is sufficiently important for it to be suggested that every time a decision is made not to make amends, the reasons should be noted in the comment column. This enables the person in addiction and recovery to review the choice.

Comments

This column is a notes column.

These notes are a catch-all as the sample shows. From reasons why not to make amends, to comments on barriers to a good outcome, to reminders on what to say. This column is crucial for planning how to get the best outcome for each encounter and to make it a better personal experience for both sides. Any thought that springs to mind can be journaled here for reference.

If you look back at the sample, the third one (highlighted) is a false call. The comments reflect the reason to not make amends is really just avoidance. The fact that the money can't be repaid is not a reason not to make amends. An offer to repay can be made. **The worksheet also acts as a tool to keep people honest.**

It is possible that the person filling in the checklist does not want to confess themselves a thief; it may be too humiliating for them. **Rather than choosing to deal with things in the right way, the person manufactures a reason for not risking the confrontation.**

This can be discussed with a sponsor and established whether reasons for not making amends are valid. It is also possible that a decision to approach someone can be made and that something has been overlooked which indicates that this may be a poor idea.

Using The Completed Worksheet

Once the worksheet has been completed, it can now be used for the purpose it was designed for. **That purpose is to help making amends for past wrongs more complete, if not easier.** It may become easier because the worksheet is a planning tool as well. That, of course, cannot be guaranteed.

Using the worksheet becomes a form of spiritual preparation when it is complete. The best way is to start by going through the list and **picking one or two easier people** from those with who you have chosen to make atonement, where the incident or incidents were not too steeped in antagonism, and use those as test runs. Look at the incident and get a picture of it in your head. Start to picture the meeting.

Look at the comments that have been noted. What do they suggest needs to be said? **Do they suggest a way that it might be approached?** Consider the two incidents with Bill in the example. Bill would certainly know about the argument but probably not about the theft, though may have noticed money had disappeared. In which order should you approach these two incidents?

The other thing to consider when planning is **what to do if things become ugly**. Let's say that at the same time as our imaginary member of the AA stole the \$110.00 from Bill, Bill had misplaced \$40.00 and believes that \$150.00 had been stolen. In the discussion, Bill states that and says the penitent is lying anyway. This is a complication on which the success of the meeting turns.

How can that be resolved? If there is a possible answer, then note that in the comments.

Now prepared for the meeting with the picture of the incident, knowledge of what drove them, ideas of how the other party may have felt, and thoughts of how to handle the meeting going forward, the alcoholic can approach the effort and amends prepared and with more confidence than otherwise.

Summary

This article has presented a ninth step worksheet and given guidance on how to use it. **The step itself becomes a massive plunge into humility** and the associated spiritual progress as the alcoholic puts to bed the consequences of our past acts. That is the very spirit of step nine – setting the consequences of previous destructive behaviors behind us.

Every time you feel hesitant about continuing. **recall the 9th step promises**.

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.

Think about the condition embedded in it – *If we are painstaking...* **This article has presented a tool to help the alcoholic complete the ninth step of the 12-step program more painstakingly.**

One final note. The ninth step promises contain the sentence

We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us

You will find that the more you make amends in this step the more that promise becomes fulfilled.

Note: Except where specified all quotes are from the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous