5

STEP FIVE

Integrity

A guide to the Fifth Step, with Scripture and prayer



Get ready with Jimmy or Sarah.

This step is done with a person: a human sponsor, pastor or priest. Your AI sponsor in the Steps & Scripture app helps you prepare. Free to download, first month free.

Steps & Scripture Step Guide: Step Five, Integrity
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If you are in danger, call or text 988, or call 911. If you have been drinking heavily and stopped, and you are shaking, sweating, confused, seeing things, or have had a seizure, go to the ER today.

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STEP FIVE

Integrity

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

JAMES 5:16 (ESV)

Where you are

You've done something most people never do. You sat down and wrote the truth about your life. Before you start Step Five, take a minute to look at the road behind you. If you picked up this guide in the middle of things, this page is for you too.

Step One. You admitted you were powerless over alcohol, and that your life had become unmanageable. Not weak. Powerless. Your body can't handle it, and your mind keeps going back to it anyway.

Step Two. You came to believe that a Power greater than yourself could restore you to sanity. Maybe it started as only willingness. That was enough.

Step Three. You made a decision to turn your will and your life over to the care of God. You prayed the Third Step prayer, and you asked Him to "Relieve me of the bondage of self" (p. 63).

Step Four. You wrote it down. Resentments, fears, sex conduct, other harms. In every entry, you looked for your own part.

Now you say it out loud. To God, to yourself, and to another person.

Haven't finished Step Four? Go back and finish it first. Step Five is the telling of what you wrote. If there's nothing written, there's nothing to tell, and you'll end up giving a general speech about being a bad drinker. Talk to your sponsor about where to pick up.

Don't let it sit

The book doesn't leave a gap between writing the inventory and telling it. On page 75 it says that once we've decided who will hear it, "we waste no time" (p. 75).

Aim to do Step Five **within a couple of weeks of finishing Step Four.** Pick the person this week. Set a date. Put it on the calendar.

The longer a finished inventory sits in a drawer, the louder fear gets. You start editing it in your head. You talk yourself out of the worst entry. You decide maybe it was enough just to write it. It wasn't. The book is plain about that, as you'll see.

This step is done with a person

Jimmy and Sarah cannot hear your Fifth Step. They are an AI, not a person. They can help you get ready, help you pick someone, and pray with you before you go. But reading your inventory into an app is not Step Five. The book says *another human being*, and it means it. Tell it to a sponsor, a pastor, a priest, or a trusted person in recovery.

What Step Five is

> "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 59

It's one sentence, and every part of it matters.

Admitted. Not explained. Not defended. Not dressed up. You say what happened and what your part was, and you let it stand.

To God. He already knows. You aren't telling Him anything new. You're agreeing with Him about it, out loud, instead of hiding.

To ourselves. This is harder than it sounds. Most of us have spent years telling ourselves a softer version of the story. Saying it out loud to someone else is how you finally hear it yourself.

And to another human being. A real person, sitting across from you, who hears all of it. This is the part people want to skip. It's also the part that does the work.

The exact nature of our wrongs. Not just what you did, but why. The selfishness, the dishonesty, the resentment and the fear underneath it. Your Step Four inventory already has this in the "my part" column. Step Five says it out loud.

What it is not

Step Five is not

- **A trial.** No one is there to sentence you.
- **Therapy.** The person isn't there to fix you or explain your childhood.
- **A chance to talk about other people.** You'll name them, because they're in your resentments. But the point is your part, not theirs.
- **A highlight reel.** You don't tell the funny stories and skip the ones that burn.
- **Done with an app.** It's done with a person.

Step Five is

- Reading your whole inventory, out loud, to one trusted person.
- Holding nothing back.
- Listening when they point out a pattern you missed.
- Coming out of hiding, before God and another human being.

Your reading for this step

Read these in your own copies, in this order. Page numbers for *Alcoholics Anonymous* are from the fourth edition.

Alcoholics Anonymous

- **Pages 72–75.** The whole Fifth Step, start to finish. Read it twice: once now, and again the night before you go.
- **Page 58.** The book's warning about people who can't be honest.
- **Page 164.** The last page of the main text. One line sums up this step.
- **Then *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, pages 55–62.** The chapter on Step Five.

Scripture (ESV)

- James 5:16 · 1 John 1:5–9 · Psalm 32:1–5
- Proverbs 28:13 · John 3:19–21 · Luke 15:17–24
- Ecclesiastes 4:9–10 · Galatians 6:1–2 · Hebrews 4:13–16

Listen, if you like: Joe and Charlie, Session 10, "Into Action —Step Five" (about 15 minutes), free in the SoberHub app. Steps & Scripture is not affiliated with SoberHub.

What the book says

Step Five takes up a little over three pages in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, at the start of the chapter "Into Action." Every paragraph counts. Read them in your own copy as you go.

Why you have to tell someone (p. 72)

The chapter opens by admitting this step is hard. Then it gets to the point:

> "The best reason first: if we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking. Time after time newcomers have tried to keep to themselves certain facts about their lives."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 72

That's not a threat. It's what the first hundred people saw happen. You can do everything else in the program and still drink, if you keep the worst of it locked up inside.

The book also says that admitting things only to yourself usually isn't enough. You wrote it down. Good. Now someone else has to hear it.

What happened to the people who skipped it (pp. 72–73)

> "Trying to avoid this humbling experience, they have turned to easier methods. Almost invariably they got drunk."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, PP. 72–73

Almost invariably. Read that twice. And here is why:

> "They took inventory all right, but hung on to some of the worst items in stock."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 73

The worst items in stock. You probably know which one is yours. It's the entry you thought about leaving off your list. It's the one you'll want to skip when you sit down to read. That's the one that has to be said.

The book says these people never really learned humility, fearlessness and honesty "until they told someone else all their life story" (p. 73).

The double life (p. 73)

> "More than most people, the alcoholic leads a double life. He is very much the actor. To the outer world he presents his stage character."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 73

You know the stage character. The one who has it together, or is the life of the party, or is just tired, or just under a lot of stress. And behind it, the things you hope no one ever finds out.

The book says what that does to a person. You push the memories down and hope they stay there, and you live "under constant fear and tension—that makes for more drinking" (p. 73).

Secrets aren't neutral. They cost you. Step Five is how you stop paying.

You have to be honest with somebody (p. 73)

> "We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, PP. 73–74

Not honest with everybody. Not on social media, or at work, or at a meeting. With *somebody*. One person who hears all of it.

The book takes the choosing seriously. It says we "think well before we choose the person or persons with whom to take this intimate and confidential step" (p. 74).

Who to choose (p. 74)

The book gives several good options:

- **A pastor or priest.** If your church practices confession, the book says you'll go to the one whose duty it is to hear it. If you don't, it says "we may still do well to talk with someone ordained by an established religion" (p. 74).
- **A close friend who can keep quiet.** The book's words are "a close-mouthed, understanding friend" (p. 74).
- **A doctor or counselor**, if that's the right person for you.
- **Your sponsor.** Most people today do Step Five with their sponsor. The book was written before there were sponsors as we know them, but this is what sponsors are for.

The book adds a warning about family: you can't tell your husband, wife or parents things that will only hurt them, just to feel better yourself.

> "We have no right to save our own skin at another person's expense. Such parts of our story we tell to someone who will understand, yet be unaffected. The rule is we must be hard on ourself, but always considerate of others."
>
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 74

What the person needs to be (p. 74)

> "It is important that he be able to keep a confidence; that he fully understand and approve what we are driving at; that he will not try to change our plan. But we must not use this as a mere excuse to postpone."
>
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, PP. 74–75

Three things. They keep it private. They understand what this step is for. They don't try to talk you into some other plan.

And then the last sentence. Looking for the perfect person can turn into a way of never doing it. The book says that if there truly is no one, you can wait, but only if you're ready to go the moment someone turns up.

Go, and bring the whole thing (p. 75)

> "When we decide who is to hear our story, we waste no time. We have a written inventory, and we are prepared for a long talk."
>
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 75

Bring what you wrote. Plan for hours, not minutes. Tell the person ahead of time what you're asking, and why. The book says they should know that you are on "a life-and-death errand" (p. 75). And it says most people will be glad to help. They "will be honored by our confidence" (p. 75).

What happens (p. 75)

> "We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 75

Every dark cranny. Not the ones that make a good story. All of them.

Then the book describes what comes after. Read it slowly. These are promises:

> "Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 75

Notice the condition: *withholding nothing*. The relief comes from telling all of it.

The hour alone (p. 75)

The book doesn't end the step when you walk out the door.

> "Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done. We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 75

An hour. Quiet. No phone, no TV. You thank God. Then you open the book to the Twelve Steps and read the first five again, and you ask whether you left anything out:

> "Carefully reading the first five proposals we ask if we have omitted anything, for we are building an arch through which we shall walk a free man at last."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 75

If you did leave something out, that's not the end of the world. Call the person back and tell them. Do it soon.

The whole program in one line (p. 164)

At the very end of the main text, the book sums up what it asks of you. Step Five is right there in the middle:

> "Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to him and your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 164

What the 12&12 adds

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions gives Step Five a full chapter, on **pages 55–62**. It's especially good on fear and on what you gain from this step. Read it in your own copy. Here is what to look for as you read. These are our notes, not the book's words.

Page 55: The easy way out. The chapter describes the way most of us try to dodge this step: we admit we were sometimes bad when we drank, tell the stories everyone already knows, and keep quiet about the things that really hurt. Notice whether you're planning to do that.

Page 56: Holding back is dangerous. The chapter says skimping on Step Five has cost people their sobriety, even people with years. It also says that confessing to another person is very old. Believers have done it for centuries. And it says God's grace doesn't seem to get to our worst obsessions until we're willing to do this.

Page 57: The end of isolation. Most alcoholics felt like they never quite belonged, even before the drinking got bad. The chapter says that even in the program, that lonely feeling hangs on until we've told someone everything and heard someone else do the same. It also says this is often where we first feel we can be forgiven, and where we find we can forgive others.

Pages 58–59: Why God alone isn't enough. The chapter explains humility as seeing who you really are and then trying to become who you could be. It says we fooled ourselves for years, so we can't trust our own self-appraisal now. We need outside help. It answers the question, "Why can't I just tell

God?" Being alone with God, it says, is easier than facing a person, and until we say it out loud, our willingness is mostly on paper.

Page 60: Choose carefully. The chapter warns that people who go it alone in spiritual things can talk themselves into nonsense and call it God's guidance. Then it talks about choosing the person: someone with experience, who has stayed sober and gotten through hard things, maybe things like yours. It may be your sponsor, but it doesn't have to be.

Page 61: Courage, then relief. The chapter is honest that it can take every bit of willpower you have just to ask. Then it describes what usually happens: the talk goes easier than you feared, the other person may share some of their own story, and the relief grows as you go. Many people say this was where they first felt God's presence.

Page 62: A resting place. The chapter ends with coming out of isolation, at one with God and other people, and ready for the steps ahead.

Read the chapter with a pen nearby, but write in a notebook, not this guide. If there's a line that scares you, bring it to your sponsor.

What Scripture says

The Bible has a word for Step Five. It's *confession*. And it says the same thing the book says: hiding sin makes you sick, and bringing it into the light is where healing starts. Read these slowly. Read them out loud if you can.

Confess to one another

The verse on the opening page of this guide is the heart of this step:

> *Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.*
>
> JAMES 5:16 (ESV)

James doesn't stop at *confess to God*. He says confess to *one another*. Then he ties it to healing. That's Step Five, written about two thousand years ago. You tell a person, they pray for you, and something heals.

If we confess, He is faithful

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 JOHN 1:5–9 (ESV)

John says if we claim we have no sin, we're fooling ourselves. That's the double life. But if we confess, God is faithful and just to forgive. Not *might* forgive. *Is faithful to.* He doesn't change His mind about you once you've said it.

When I kept silent

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

PSALM 32:1–5 (ESV)

David knew what keeping a secret does to a body. His bones wasted away. He groaned all day. He felt God's hand heavy on him. Then he stopped hiding: *I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.* And God forgave.

If you've felt sick and heavy carrying something nobody knows, this psalm is about you. Read the first two verses again after you've done this step.

Whoever conceals

> *Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.*
>
> PROVERBS 28:13 (ESV)

Two roads, one verse. Hide it, and things don't go well. Confess it *and forsake it*, and you find mercy. Step Five is the confessing. Steps Six through Nine are the forsaking.

Coming into the light

> *"And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."*
>
> JOHN 3:19–21 (ESV)

Jesus says people stay in the dark because they don't want their deeds exposed. That's every one of us at the bottom. But the one who does what is true comes to the light. Step Five

is walking into the light on purpose, before anything forces you there.

The son comes home

> *"But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants."' And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate."*
>
> LUKE 15:17–24 (ESV)

The son had his speech ready: *I have sinned against heaven and before you*. He was afraid of what his father would say. But his father saw him a long way off, ran to him, and threw his arms around him before he'd finished.

You may be dreading this step the way that son dreaded the road home. Read how the father acted. That's how God receives a confession.

Two are better than one

> *Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!*
>
> ECCLESIASTES 4:9–10 (ESV)

Woe to him who is alone when he falls. Alcoholics are experts at being alone. Step Five is where you stop being alone with what you've done. Somebody else knows now, and they're still there.

Bear one another's burdens

> *Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*
>
> GALATIANS 6:1–2 (ESV)

This passage is for the person listening as much as for you. It tells them to restore you *gently*, and to watch themselves. That's the kind of person you want to choose: someone who knows they could fall too. And it tells you that letting someone help carry this is part of following Christ, not a weakness.

Draw near with confidence

> *And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*
>
> HEBREWS 4:13–16 (ESV)

Nothing is hidden from God. That could be terrifying. But the passage doesn't stop there. We have a high priest, Jesus, who understands weakness. So we come to the throne of grace *with confidence*, to find mercy. You aren't walking into a courtroom. You're walking toward grace.

How to work Step Five

Here is a plain way to work this step. Your sponsor may suggest something different. Go with your sponsor.

1. Finish Step Four

Make sure all four inventories are written: resentments, fears, sex conduct and other harms, with your part filled in for each resentment. If something's still missing, finish it first.

2. Pray about who to ask

Ask God to show you the right person. Then think it through with the page after this chapter. For most people it's their sponsor. For some, it's a pastor or priest. It is always a person, never Jimmy or Sarah.

3. Ask them, and set a date

Call or ask face to face. Tell them you've finished your Fourth Step and you'd like them to hear your Fifth. Agree on a day within the next week or two. Pick a private place and plan for several hours. Some people need a whole afternoon, or two sittings.

4. Get ready

- Read pages 72–75 again the night before.
- Get your inventory together. If it's in the app, you can export it as a PDF and print it.
- Pray. Ask God for courage and for honesty.
- Get some sleep. Eat something before you go.

5. Pray, then read it all

Many people start by praying together. Then you read your inventory out loud, all of it, in order. Resentments, fears, sex conduct, other harms.

Don't skip the hard entry. If you notice you're about to, say so: *There's one I almost left off.* Then read it.

6. Listen

A good listener will stop you now and then. They may ask a question, or point out a pattern: *I notice fear shows up in almost every one of these.* That's a gift. Don't argue. Let them help you see the exact nature of the thing.

7. Take the hour alone

Go home, or somewhere quiet, right afterward. Spend an hour with God. Thank Him. Read the Twelve Steps on page 59 and look over the first five. Ask if you left anything out. If you did, call the person back soon.

8. Tell your sponsor, and go on

If someone other than your sponsor heard your Fifth Step, tell your sponsor it's done. Then go on to Step Six. You'll take the defects that came up today and get ready to let God remove them.

If you use the app, you can tell Jimmy or Sarah afterward that you did it with a person. They'll mark the step done and help you start Step Six. They'll also ask how the hour alone went.

Choosing the person, and what to expect

Keep this page handy while you decide. The page numbers point back to *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

Good choices (p. 74)

- **Your sponsor.** The most common choice. They already know your story and have done this step themselves.
- **A pastor or priest.** Especially if your church practices confession, or you want a minister's counsel on sin and forgiveness.
- **A trusted person in recovery** with solid time sober who has done all twelve steps.
- **A Christian counselor or doctor**, if that's the right fit.

What the person needs (p. 74)

- Keeps a confidence. No one else hears this. Not their spouse, not the group.
- Understands what Step Five is, and agrees with what you're doing.
- Won't try to change your plan or turn it into something else.
- Has been through hard things themselves, and won't be shocked.

Who not to choose

- **Your husband, wife, or the person you hurt.** If it would only wound them, it goes to someone outside it (p. 74).
- **Someone in the middle of it**, like a coworker, a friend involved in the same events, or anyone who'd be hurt or tempted to use it.
- **Someone who gossips**, or someone who'd enjoy your secrets a little too much.
- **Someone still drinking**, or someone who'd tell you it wasn't so bad.
- **An app or an AI.** Not Jimmy, not Sarah, not anything else on a screen.

Most sponsors suggest that men hear men and women hear women, the same as sponsorship. That matters most for the sex conduct inventory.

What to bring (p. 75)

- Your whole written inventory: resentments, fears, sex conduct, other harms.
- Your own copy of *Alcoholics Anonymous*.
- Time. Plan on hours. Don't schedule anything right after.

What usually happens

- You pray together to start.
- You read. They listen, and now and then ask a question.
- They may point out patterns: the same fear, the same defect, again and again.
- They may tell you a little of their own story. It helps.
- It goes easier than you feared. Most people say so.
- You pray together to finish. Then you go have your hour alone.

If something in your inventory could bring legal trouble, talk to your pastor or sponsor before you go about how to handle it. What you tell a sponsor isn't protected by law the way a confession to clergy often is. This is not a reason to hold it back from God. It's a reason to choose the person carefully.

Questions to think about

These aren't for writing in this guide. Think them over, pray about them, write in a notebook if that helps, and talk them through with your sponsor. Jimmy and Sarah ask some of the same questions in the app.

1. Who can you trust to hear your inventory? Name one person.
2. When will you ask them? What day will you do it?
3. What's the entry you most want to leave out? Why that one?
4. What are you afraid will happen when you say it out loud?
5. What has keeping secrets cost you? Your health, your sleep, your relationships?
6. What does your "stage character" look like? Who are you when no one is watching?
7. Is there anyone in your inventory who would be hurt if they heard certain parts? Who should hear those parts instead?
8. Read Luke 15:17–24. What do you expect God to do when you confess? What does this story say He does?
9. After you shared it, what did you notice in the hour alone?
10. Did you leave anything out? If so, when will you call the person back?

Suggestions for this week

Pick one at a time. You don't need to do all of them.

- Choose the person and set a date within two weeks of finishing Step Four.
- Read pages 72–75 of *Alcoholics Anonymous* out loud, the night before.
- Bring your inventory with you. If it's in the app, export it as a PDF.
- Afterward, take the hour alone (p. 75). Then tell your sponsor how it went.
- Read Step Five in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (pp. 55–62) in your own copy.
- Read Psalm 32 the morning of your Fifth Step, and again that night.
- Memorize James 5:16.
- Go to a meeting the day after, and tell someone you did your Fifth Step.
- Go to church this Sunday. If you don't have a church, try one.

When it's hard

Almost everyone is afraid of this step. Here's what that usually looks like, and what to do.

"I'm terrified to say it out loud."

Of course you are. You've spent years making sure no one found out. The fear is real, but it's lying to you about what will happen. People who have heard many Fifth Steps rarely hear anything new. Pray, pick up the phone, and ask. The fear usually breaks the minute you start reading.

"They'll think less of me."

Most people say the opposite happened. The listener often says *me too*, and means it. And the person who hears it doesn't go away. They know the worst, and they're still there. That's what ends the double life.

"Can't I just tell God?"

You already have, in a way. He knows. But the step says *another human being*, and the book says plainly that those who skip it almost always drink. Being alone with God is easier than facing a person. That's exactly why you need the person.

"Can't I just tell Jimmy or Sarah?"

No. They're an AI. They'll tell you so themselves. They can help you get ready and pick someone. But an app can't look you in the eye, keep you accountable, or pray for you the way James 5:16 means. Find a person.

"There's one thing I can't tell anyone."

That's the one. The book calls it the "worst items in stock" (p. 73). If you're scared of how to say it, start with: *There's one thing I've never told anyone*. Then read it. If it involves someone who could be hurt, or the law, talk to your pastor or sponsor first about who should hear it. But someone has to.

"I can't find the right person."

Look harder before you settle for waiting. Ask your sponsor, your pastor, or someone at a meeting with years sober. The book allows a delay only when there truly is no one, and warns against using that as an excuse (p. 74).

"I did it, and I don't feel anything."

Some people feel a flood of relief. Some just feel tired. Feelings aren't the test. Did you tell all of it? Did you take the hour alone? Then you did the step. The book's promises often come gradually, not all in one afternoon.

If you want to drink, call someone before you do anything else. Your sponsor, someone from a meeting, your pastor. Get to a meeting today. If you are in danger, call or text 988, or call 911.

Prayers for this step

The book doesn't give a written prayer for Step Five. It tells you to thank God afterward, during the hour alone. Here are two prayers in our own words. Pray them as they are, or use your own.

Before you go

Lord Jesus, You already know everything I'm about to say. Nothing is hidden from You, and You haven't turned away from me.

Give me courage to say all of it. Don't let me skip the hard parts or make myself look better than I am. Help me tell the truth about what I did and why I did it.

Bless the person who will listen. Give them wisdom, and help them keep it close. Let this be the end of hiding.

In Your name. Amen.

In the hour alone

Father, I did it. I told another person the truth, and I'm still here. Thank You.

Thank You that if we confess our sins, You are faithful and just to forgive. I believe You have. Help me believe it on the days I don't feel it.

Show me if I left anything out. If I did, give me the courage to go back.

Now get me ready for what's next. I don't want to carry these defects any longer. Thank You for this day sober. Thy will be done. Amen.

Ready for Step Six?

Before you call this step done, talk these over with your sponsor:

- Did you read your whole inventory to another person, nothing held back?
- Was it a person, and not an app?
- Did you spend the quiet hour afterward the book describes?
- Did you read the first five steps again and ask if you left anything out?
- If you did leave something out, did you go back and say it?

You don't have to feel brand new to move on. You need to have told all of it, to a person, and taken the hour.

What's next

Step Six is becoming ready. You'll look at the defects that kept showing up as you read your inventory: the selfishness, the dishonesty, the resentment, the fear. You'll ask yourself whether you're willing to let God remove all of them, even the ones you'd rather keep.

The book moves straight from the hour alone to Step Six on page 76. Read that page this week.

KEEP GOING

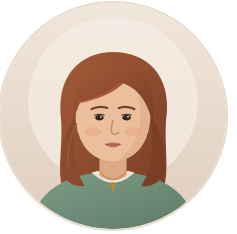
Talk it over with Jimmy or Sarah

Steps & Scripture is a Christian Twelve Step app for iPhone and Android. Your sponsor, Jimmy for men or Sarah for women, is an AI who knows *Alcoholics Anonymous* and the Bible. Your sponsor walks the steps with you, one conversation at a time, and keeps pointing you to meetings, a human sponsor, your church, and the phone.

Step Five itself is done with a person, not the app. Jimmy or Sarah can help you get ready for it.



Jimmy



Sarah

Download on the App Store

Get it on Google Play

Free to download. First month free, no card. For adults 18 and older. Jimmy and Sarah are AI. They are not people, and they say so.

IF TODAY IS A BAD DAY

Get help now

If you are in danger or thinking about hurting yourself: call or text **988**, the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, or call **911**.

Withdrawal can kill. If you have been drinking heavily and stopped, and you are shaking, sweating, confused, seeing things, or have had a seizure, go to the ER today. If you drink heavily every day, talk to a doctor before you stop.

If you want to drink

- Call someone before you pick up. Your sponsor, someone from a meeting, your pastor.
- Get to a meeting today, early, and stay late.
- Ask: am I hungry, angry, lonely or tired? Deal with that first.
- Play the tape forward. Walk past the first drink to tonight, tomorrow morning, and who you'll have to tell.
- Pray. Even "God, help me" counts.

The SAMHSA National Helpline is free and open 24/7: 1-800-662-4357.

THE PROGRAM

The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. **Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

1939 wording (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 59).