

STEP EIGHT

Made a list of all people we have harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Step Eight incorporates honesty, openness, willingness, faith, acceptance, love and forgiveness. This Step is about *becoming willing* to make amends, not actually making the amends. We look back and try to discover where we've been at fault. Having begun this work in Step 4, we identify all the people we have harmed and in what ways.

Although we may be tempted to rush out and make our amends, it's important for us to remember that Step Eight is merely making a list. If we try to make amends without our sponsor's guidance and a plan, we may end up doing more harm than good.

Getting Started:

- Read “**Step Eight**” in LIFE WITH HOPE.
- Review Step Eight with your sponsor, or with a trusted member of MA.
- Look up the words *amends* and *forgiveness*; write out the definitions that you find to be significant, and write what each word means to you.
- Review the word *willing* from Step Six. Has it's meaning changed for you at all since you worked that Step?

Willingness:

Some of us need to begin by praying for help to become willing to make our list. Staying focused on that objective is often very helpful.

- Am I willing to make my list?
- List any resentments preventing me from being willing to make an amends.
- Is it possible to let go of those resentments now? If not, can I add those names to my list anyway, and work towards becoming willing later?
- What might help me to become more willing?
- Are there amends I need to make that might cause harm to myself, or others?
- What concerns and/or fears am I having?

Writing Our List:

We write down whom we have harmed as a result of our character defects, and precisely how we harmed them. We categorize our list according to those we feel should receive immediate amends, those we are willing to approach soon, those we will approach later, and those we can't imagine ever being willing to approach. Our list may include people

who have passed away, or those we have little chance of locating. We may also want to add ourselves to the list.

We write down the harm we have caused spiritually, socially, mentally, physically and financially.

For Example:

Spiritually

- Did we force others to adhere to our beliefs without respect for theirs?
- Had we used sarcasm or other means to undercut others' beliefs?

Socially

- Had we hurt others to feel superior, or had we acted passively to gain control?
- Did we isolate from our family and friends?

Mentally

- Did we maliciously toy with other people's minds?
- Were we neglectful, manipulative, or exploitive?

Physically

- Did we abuse others, or let others batter us (or our children)?
- Had we sexually harmed or cheated on someone?
- Did we try to do our best, or did we do just enough to get by?

Financially

- Were we careless and wasteful, or greedy and miserly?
- Had we deprived others of necessities?
- Had we cheated, or stolen from others?

Wherever possible, we write down what we might do to set things straight with the people on our list. Where applicable, we identify what might stop us from making an amends to a particular person. □ □

It may be that we are not responsible for some of the harm we place on our list. Reviewing each amends with our sponsor or spiritual advisor is essential. They can help us gain insight, strength, hope and the forgiveness necessary to proceed to STEP NINE.