



## Rapha's Step Studies for Overcoming Sexual Addiction

### STEP 4

**We make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**

*Let us examine and probe our ways, and let us return to the Lord.  
Lamentations 3:40*

*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, and will forgive our sins  
and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.  
1 John 1:8-9*

Having surrendered your will in Step 3, you are now ready to begin the growth process of Steps 4 to 7, in which you examine yourself, confess what you find to God and to another person, become willing to repent, and ask God for healing. At first, this step might seem intimidating. But God gives us the courage and determination to do things which seem impossible.

Putting down your inventory in black and white helps you to deal with a process which is at the root of your addiction—DENIAL. It is denial that prevents you from getting the help you need. As sexual addiction progresses, denial intensifies. Writing out your inventory enables you to glimpse the truth behind the strong illusion of denial.

The fourth step is more than a list of wrong actions. It is extremely important that you deal with underlying motivations and accompanying behaviors which on the surface may seem innocent. It is also important to see patterns of behaviors and how one behavior leads to another.

Writing an inventory has been compared to peeling an onion, with each layer revealing a deeper layer beneath. You begin to see the real reasons why you turn to your addiction. You begin to see how God can heal you as you accept His love. You begin to see that you really can trust God to take care of you as you totally surrender your needs for sexual and emotional intimacy to Him. As you write out your inventory,



it is of utmost importance to remember that "... there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). Writing the inventory may release feelings of shame or fear, but the experience will be less painful if you remind yourself throughout the process that God loves you. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time" (1 Peter 5:6).

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE MORAL INVENTORY**

First, write your own story of how you became sexually addicted and its progression in your life. Writing this inventory is a difficult process. You may need to find a counselor or a friend who is familiar with sexual addiction to assist you.

The following outline divides the inventory into four sections which should be written during a period of a few weeks rather than at one sitting. You do not have to use this outline. It is merely a guide if you get stuck in the process.

### **1. Early childhood**

- a. Relationship with mother
- b. Relationship with father
- c. Relationships with other parental figures
- d. Relationships with siblings
- e. Abuse suffered: physical, emotional, sexual
- f. Other significant life events
- g. Childhood view of God

### **2. Adolescence**

- a. School and social experiences
  - 1. School and social experiences Masturbation
  - 2. Experiences with others
  - 3. Pornography and/or promiscuity
  - 4. Other compulsive sexual behavior
- b. Other compulsive behavior
  - 1. Alcohol
  - 2. Drugs
  - 3. Anger
  - 4. Other
- c. Spiritual growth
  - 1. Religious education
  - 2. Feelings of guilt
  - 3. Personal picture of God
  - 4. Other significant life events



### 3. Adult life

- a. Marriage or committed relationships
- b. Sexual or intimate relationships outside of marriage
- c. Progression of compulsive sexual behavior
- d. Effects of behavior on other relationships
- e. Other significant life events
- f. Spiritual understanding of guilt and forgiveness

### 4. Present life

- a. Events that led you to seek help
- b. Present compulsive sexual behavior
- c. Resources that give you hope in your healing process
- d. Goals for the future\*

## RESENTMENTS AND BLESSINGS

Describe in detail the resentments and blessings in your life:

**Resentments** - (feelings of bitterness or ill will toward people, places, things, events, and God)

**People:**

Who?

What happened?

Result in my life?

What was my part?

**Places, Things, Events:**

What happened?

Result in my life?



What was my part?

**God:**

What happened?

Result in my life?

What was my part?

**Blessings** - (how you have been approved, encouraged, helped, and caused to have good will towards people, places, things, events, and God)

**People:**

Who?

What happened?

Result in my life?

What was my part?

**Places, Things, Events:**

What happened?

Result in my life?

What was my part?



**God:**

What happened?

Result in my life?

What was my part?

## **CHARACTER DEFECTS**

Finally, identify each of the character defects that you believe God wants you to change in yourself. Some examples are:

1. tendency to isolate and avoid others
2. repression of anger or raging with anger
3. approval-seeking
4. caretaking to an unhealthy degree
5. controlling others
6. fear of abandonment
7. rebellion against authority
8. burying feelings
9. self-condemnation
10. others that you may identify ...

For each character defect that seems relevant to you, give two examples of how this defect is expressed in your relationships with yourself, others, and God.

If you experience difficulty in any of this process, call someone who can help you get back on track. Take your time. This process takes a lot of time and a lot of thought and prayer.

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**Rapha Hospital Treatment Centers**  
8876 Gulf Freeway, Suite 340  
Houston, Texas 77017  
1 (800) 383-HOPE 1 (713) 944-1111