

## OA-HOW Fifth Step Ceremony

Note to Sponsor: This ceremony has two purposes. The first is to celebrate with your sponsoree his/her completion of his/her fourth and fifth step. Secondly, it can help him/her begin to identify for him/herself the character defects that have contributed to his/her problems with living. It is also good at this time for him/her to acknowledge those character assets that have added to his/her life. This outline is suggestive only. You may use it verbatim or you may use it as an outline. Do personalize it to fit your way of sharing your experience, strength, and hope.

Sponsor reads aloud: Congratulations on the completion of your fourth and fifth steps. I hope this inventory has given you some valuable insights into your past. Certainly, you have reflected seriously on the good times and bad times in your life and have begun to see the patterns and habits of how you reacted to various personalities and situations over the years. As you have looked at yourself with honesty, you have probably digested some uncomfortable truths about yourself. As you have looked at yourself with love, you have also acknowledged the good that dwells within you and begun to identify the values by which you want to live your life.

Sponsor asks sponsoree to light first candle, saying: This is the candle of honesty. You have taken up this tool and sharpened it in the process of self-examination. If you respect it, it will remain in your toolkit and will help you progress along the road of “Happy Destiny”.

(Note to sponsor: There is a chart included in your “Sponsor’s Booklet” that can be helpful with this part of the fifth step ceremony. It provides a way to list the character defects you sponsoree will want to include in her 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Steps and the names to be included in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Steps.)

Sponsor continues: Your inventory has covered the three major time spans of your life: childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.

Sponsor asks sponsoree to read in the “Big Book” page 70-71 beginning with, “If we have been thorough...”).

Sponsor asks the following questions and helps to write answers on chart if desired.

1. As you reflect back upon the questions related to your childhood, are there any specific relationships about which you are still disturbed?
2. Who are those relationships with? Write these names down.
3. Next to each person, write down one or two of the negative feelings (instincts that have been threatened) you associate with that relationship.
4. With each person, if you believe that they harmed you, are you now willing to forgive them? Why or why not?
5. If you believe you harmed that person, are you now willing to forgive yourself? Why or why not?

6. Understanding yourself as you do now, look back over each of the names and what you've written. What specific character traits can you identify within yourself that contributed to the damage in each of these relationships? Write these traits down.

Sponsor asks sponsoree to light the next candle, saying: This is the candle of trust. I hope that this hard work will re-awaken in you the joy and trust you experienced as a child. Believe that:

- Whatever your faults, you deserved loving, stable caregivers.
- Whatever trouble occurred for you and/or your family, you can be proud that you did survive.
- Whatever habits you might have acquired to help you survive the rough times of childhood, you are free today to let them go if they no longer serve you.

Are there thoughts or feelings you wish to add?

### **Now the Adolescence**

Sponsor asks sponsoree to read in the "Big Book" the two paragraphs on page 73 beginning with, "More than most people..."

Sponsor asks the following questions:

1. As you reflect back upon the questions related to your adolescence, are there any specific relationships about which you are still disturbed?
2. Who are those relationships with? Write these names down.
3. Next to each person, write down one or two of the negative feelings (instincts that have been threatened) you associate with that relationship.
4. With each person, if you believe that they harmed you, are you now willing to forgive them? Why or why not?
5. If you believe you harmed that person, are you now willing to forgive yourself? Why or why not?
6. Understanding yourself as you do now, look back over each of the names and what you've written. What specific character traits can you identify within yourself that contributed to the damage in each of these relationships? Write these traits down.

Sponsor asks sponsoree to light the next candle, saying: This is the candle of discovery. I hope that your hard work will reconnect you with the joy of discovery that you felt as an adolescent. Believe that:

- Whatever negative messages you might have heard from your peers or your family, you were a beautiful child of God.

- It is never too late to use your talents.
- It is never too late to pursue your dreams.

### **Now for adulthood**

Sponsor asks sponsoree to read in the “Big Book” the four paragraphs on pages 13-14 beginning with, “My schoolmate visited me...”

1. As you reflect back upon the questions related to your childhood, are there any specific relationships about which you are still disturbed?
2. Who are those relationships with? Write these names down.
3. Next to each person, write down one or two of the negative feelings (instincts that have been threatened) you associate with that relationship.
4. With each person, if you believe that they harmed you, are you now willing to forgive them? Why or why not?
5. If you believe you harmed that person, are you now willing to forgive yourself? Why or why not?
6. Understanding yourself as you do now, look back over each of the names and what you’ve written. What specific character traits can you identify within yourself that contributed to the damage in each of these relationships? Write these traits down.

Sponsor asks sponsoree to light the next candle, saying: This is the candle of responsibility. I hope the gift you have given yourself in completing this inventory will empower you to continue on your own spiritual path. You are well on your way to experiencing the gifts this program promises. Believe that:

- Whatever difficulties still complicate your life, you have everything you need to live a rich and healthy life.
- In God’s hands, your past can be one of your greatest assets.
- Your Higher Power wants you to be happy, joyous, and free.

Sponsor asks sponsoree to read in the “Big Book” the one paragraph on page 75 beginning with, “We pocket our pride...”

Sponsor continues: An inventory looks at assets and liabilities. Let’s reflect on your positive traits and how they have manifested in your life and relationships.

1. As you reflect upon the questions you’ve answered, are there any relationships that hold a special place in your heart?
2. Who are these relationships with?

3. Write down one or two of the positive feelings (character assets) you associate with that relationship.
4. Understanding that there is some bad in the best of us and some good in the worst of us, and that we are all human beings. Tell me what you have come to appreciate about YOU. List your good qualities.

Sponsor asks sponsoree to light the next candle, saying: This is the candle of integrity. It symbolizes the wholeness that one experiences when she has come to truly know herself. Believe that you have experienced in this inventory: honesty, trust, discover, responsibility, and integrity. And your newfound strength and hope will be an essential part in building a joyful life.

Sponsor continues: Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your recovery and trusting me to listen to your inventory. Witnessing your willingness to do your inventory and listening to the insights it has given you about yourself has helped me as much as it has helped you. You are now an Inventory Sponsor and can help others to receive the same gift of self-knowledge that you have received from this step.

Let me encourage you to continue your commitment to your recovery by obtaining a Step Sponsor and moving forward by answering these questions. (Sponsor hands questions for Steps 6-12 to sponsoree. If Sponsor has kept a written list of defects for his/her sponsoree while the sponsoree was sharing the inventory, the sponsor can give the defect list or a copy of it to his/her sponsoree now.) These questions will help you to identify your character defects and to begin the process of asking your Higher Power to help you grow out of them.