

## Transformational Change Checklist

For some people, the transition from addiction and recovery occurs in a moment—a powerful experience that forever separates past and present. Scientists who have studied these religious and non-religious recovery conversion experiences refer to this style of recovery as transformational change or quantum change. Such experiences can be so powerful that one is sometimes left disoriented and questioning one's own sanity. The checklist below contains elements that many people note as part of their transformational change experiences. The list may help you understand the legitimacy and value of your experience.

- My experience was preceded by a period of emotional unrest.
- My experience occurred during or immediately following a period of social isolation.
- Immediately before or during the experience, I encountered a powerful message/messenger.
- I experienced new insights that seem to come from deep within me.
- I experienced something over which I had no control.
- What I experienced was sudden, unplanned and unanticipated.
- The experience was extremely intense, and I felt like a new person afterwards.
- The experience was accompanied by strange physical/emotional experiences unlike any I have had before—voices, visions, profound sensory awareness, new ideas, a deep sense of love and acceptance, a deep connection to others and/or a sense of release and freedom.
- I experienced the presence of a spiritual being.
- During or immediately after the experience, I feared I might be “going crazy.”
- The after-effects of the experience have been positive.
- The experience seems to have left a lasting, permanent effect on me.
- After the experience, my appetite for alcohol and drugs was diminished or taken away completely.
- The experience changed who I am as a person.

If you have experienced many of the items above, you may well have had an experience of transformation change that is positive and potentially permanent. In 1934, an alcoholic hospitalized for his fourth treatment had

such an experience. His name was Bill Wilson—the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. Since then, millions of individuals have found sobriety and serenity in AA and other Twelve Step fellowships.

## **References**

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