



The Diamond of Recovery

Reflecting the glow of recovery from Starlight at Tamassee

By Jon Holland, CEO of Tamassee DAR School



Recently an acquaintance was showing off her diamond ring. It's the kind of gorgeous stone you get if your fiancé is wealthy or if your husband saved up for a milestone anniversary. The appraiser declared her ring to be a perfect diamond. No imperfections; no flaws. When the light hits it, the radiance is brilliant and pure. It's the kind of diamond a lady proudly shows off.

I often think of recovery as a diamond. You have to dig deep through lots of dirt and rock to find it. The stone must be cut and polished. A beautiful diamond is a lot of hard work. It's also quite pricey. The real thing will set you back, but oh how it's worth it. Recovery too is hard work, and we pay a price for it. But what a beautiful diamond it is – the breathtaking loveliness of a life made whole!

Like a diamond, recovery's beauty is multi-faceted. Because addiction is a disease of the brain, recovery must heal the brain. The hypervigilant survival brain (brain stem) and the hyperactive emotional brain (limbic system) are dysregulated by addiction. In recovery, an array of steps help the survival and emotional brains settle down, and the executive brain (prefrontal cortex) begins to function as designed. I can reason, make plans, achieve goals, live by my moral values, regulate my emotions, manage fear and shame, and step into love, peace, hope, and joy.



Because addiction is a brain disease, it impacts my thinking and feeling. The diamond of recovery means I replace trauma lies with liberating truth to change my behavior. I grieve the painful emotions that have dictated my choices and learn to cultivate life-giving emotions to enjoy a fulfilling life. Another facet of the diamond of recovery is stepping out of the isolation I've lived in due to my pain and use. I step into relationships with safe, healthy people in open, honest, loving ways. We are wounded in relationships, and we heal in relationships. All recovery is learning to trust again, of letting ourselves be loved over time. Such beauty!

Finally, the diamond of recovery is spiritual. In recovery, I learn to connect with God, who is the source of all love. I experience forgiveness for the damage I've done, and I choose to forgive those who have damaged me. Forgiveness is essential to healing. As my heart heals, my will is strengthened to make better choices. To step out the hard rock that makes me feel buried underground and embrace the grandeur of my true identity in God. The person he created and longs for me to be.

At Starlight at Tamasee, we believe in the diamond of recovery. We believe moms and children can shine with all the beauty of a transformed life. To learn more about Starlight, visit www.starlight.tdarschool.org, or contact us at 864-944-1390 or starlight@tdarschool.org. If your church or civic group is interested in a presentation on recovery, contact Jon Holland at jholland@tdarschool.org.