



Confession Is Good...

Reflecting the glow of recovery from Starlight at Tamassee

By Jon Holland, CEO of Tamassee DAR School



It's likely a Scottish proverb originating in the mid-1800s. You've probably heard it from a parent or grandparent, a teacher or pastor. "Confession is good for the soul." Whether it's on a therapist's couch, by a coach's desk, in a Catholic confessional booth, or over a cup of coffee in a quiet corner of the shop, unburdening our hurts and failures helps heal the heart. It's like opening a window and letting the bad air out.

Step Five of the Twelve Steps states, "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs." Step Five follows directly after Step Four where we made a searching and fearless moral inventory. Once we've written our liabilities and assets, it's time to share them.

This begins with God. You can kneel by your bed, sit across from an empty chair, or go for a long walk. However you do it, tell God the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Some people find it deeply meaningful to engage your imagination. Visualize God with you as you share your inventory. See how he looks with compassion and understanding at you. Listen for his words of grace and mercy spoken silently in your spirit.

Next we share our inventory with another person. Here it is essential to choose wisely. We need someone who will listen without judgment and

who will keep our confidence. If you're already attending a Twelve Step fellowship, look for the person who others respect and who is well established in their recovery. You can also select a counselor, pastor, or mature, healthy trusted friend.

Then dive in and share your inventory. Some people like to read through it. Others use the inventory as a prompt and share more conversationally. There's no right or wrong way so long as we are honest. Be prepared for some emotion. Often sharing our stories and the painful parts of our lives brings up strong feelings. When they come, let them. Feel them out and breathe through them. It's part of the healing process.



Often when a person is brand new to recovery and sharing a Fifth Step for the first time, they feel afraid. The fear judgment, condemnation, embarrassment, or shame. The collective wisdom of Twelve Steppers over the decades attests that those who let fear keep them from a thorough Fifth Step often relapse. It's essential not only for your sobriety to share your inventory but also for the incredible benefits you'll feel afterwards.

People who complete an authentic Fifth Step report feelings of connection, peace, forgiveness, acceptance, joy, humility, and freedom. It feels good to be truly known by another person, to finally have no secrets, to experience forgiveness, to realize you're not the center of the universe, to feel a load of shame and regret fall off your shoulders. It's transformative and healing.

At Starlight at Tamassee, we believe confession is good for the soul, and we offer mothers in recovery a safe and caring community to be known, accepted, and liberated. To learn more about Starlight, visit www.starlight.tdarschool.org, or contact us at starlight@tdarschool.org or 864-944-1390. If your church or civic group is interested in a presentation on recovery, contact Jon Holland at jholland@tdarschool.org.

