



Daily Check Up

Reflecting the glow of recovery from Starlight at Tamassee

By Jon Holland, CEO of Tamassee DAR School



One of the most practical and useful things we learn as children are the habits of daily hygiene. Brushing our teeth each morning and evening and flossing each night. Taking care of bathroom functions and bathing each day. I remember well my wife's and my excitement when we were completely done with diapers for our kids! Learning to care for our bodies each and every day is essential both for our health and for self-respect.

In the Twelve Steps of addiction recovery, Steps 10, 11, and 12 are the habits of daily self-care and hygiene – not for our bodies but for our souls. They are as essential, practical, and useful as using the bathroom, showering, brushing teeth, putting on make up, shaving, and all the rest. If we ignore them, then our hearts, minds, and relationships get stinky and nasty. We don't enjoy talking to the person with bad breath or body odor, and we don't enjoy relating to the person living from self-will.

By way of brief review, Steps 1 through 3 put us on the path of spiritual renewal, and Steps 4 through 9 cleared the blockages to this new lifestyle. Steps 10 through 12 keep us on this path of freedom. Steps 10 through 12 (like Steps 1 through 3) are a lifelong process. Over time, they remove the obsession to use and teach our brains a better way to live.

Specifically, Step 10 puts Steps 4 through 9 into daily practice. None of us are perfect. Even when we are doing our best to treat others as we want to be treated, we make mistakes. We get triggered and overreact. An old bout of selfishness comes storming back. Or we are dishonest because we're afraid of the consequences of a poor choice. When we tell ourselves the truth, we know we still fail to live up to our and God's ideals.

At the same time, we are growing and changing. We are learning little by little to be our best selves, to love others as we want to be loved, to live comfortably in our own skin, and those successes are worth recognizing and celebrating, not least because they fuel our continued transformation.



Step 10 simply honors this reality by asking us to take inventory each night before we go to bed. We review our day and let our conscience tell us how we did living by God's will or by self-will that day. Just like our getting ready for bed routine each night, this daily prayer routine cares for our spirits.

Taking inventory is quite simple. We ask God's Spirit to help us reflect on our day. Then we use the four ideals of God's will and notice when during that day we were loving, honest, forgiving, and trusting. As we do, we give God thanks for helping us grow and progress.

Then we use the traits for self-will and notice when during the day we were selfish, dishonest, resentful, or fearful. We talk to God about these things, asking for forgiveness and for wisdom and strength to make amends the next day. If others treated us with self-will, we pray to forgive and ask how we can bless or serve this person.

At Starlight at Tamasee, we believe moms in recovery can practice this daily soul check up and learn to live in lasting wholeness. 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.