

Step 5

PARAMETERS

- 1) Call and request
- 2) Give projected time when you will be done writing your Fourth Step
- 3) Set a date and time to meet
- 4) Negotiate how it will be done (1 hour a day, five hours a day, every day, every other day, once a week, etc.) Whatever works best for both of you
- 5) Choose a place that has complete privacy (your home, the receiver's home, retreat center, therapist's office, etc.)
- 6) Avoid all disturbances. Have phone unplugged, others in the home out for the day, etc.
- 7) Bring a lunch and snack if meeting for the day
- 8) Light a candle to invite your Higher Power into this sacred moment
- 9) Kneel together and say the Third Step prayer together before beginning
- 10) Bring an empty chair over and invite your Higher Power to oversee this special time.
- 11) Read aloud all of your written words
- 12) Talk to the receiver prior to about listening and input. Will you read without comments?
- 13) When you have finished reading and discussing what you have written thank your Higher Power for being there, blow out the candle and thank your friend for receiving your Fifth Step
- 14) Take one quiet hour with God and ask if there is anything left out. If anything comes up, go to your new friend and confidant and work it out. If nothing comes up, go onto Step Six – “Were entirely ready to have God remove these defects of character.”

Step 5 (72:1 – 75:3)

Warnings for skipping the 5th Step:

1. (72:2) We may not Overcome Overeating.
2. (73:0) We will not learn Humility.
3. (73:0) We will not learn Fearlessness.
4. (73:0) We will not learn Honesty.
5. (73:0) We will be plagued by Egoism and Fear.
6. (74:0) We will not expect to Live Long.
7. (74:0) We will not Live Happily.

With whom do we do a 5th Step?

1. (74:0) The proper appointed authority if part of your religion.
2. (74:0) Someone ordained by an established religion even if you have no religious connection.
3. (74:1) A Close-mouthed, Understanding Friend.
4. (74:1) A Doctor or Psychologist.
5. (74:1) A Family Member who will not get hurt or made unhappy by what we will disclose.
6. (74:2) Someone who can keep a confidence.
7. (74:2) Someone who fully understands and approves of what we are driving at; that he will not try to change our plan.

Pre-Fifth Step Prayer:

God, please remove my fear and help me be completely Honest in what I am about to do. Please Father, give me the Courage, Faith and Strength I need to share with this person my whole truth, especially the things I swore I'd take with me to the grave. Amen.

Fifth Step Rule:

(74:1) We must always be hard on our self, but always considerate of others.

How to Fifth Step:

1. (75:1) We Decide who is to hear our story.
2. (75:1) We Waste no time.
3. (75:1) We have a Written Inventory.
4. (75:1) We are prepared for a Long Talk.
5. (75:1) We Explain to our partner what we are about to do and why we have to do it.
6. (75:1) Be sure he realizes that we are on a Life & Death errand.
7. (75:2) We Pocket our Pride and go to it.
8. (75:2) We Illuminate every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past.

Fifth Step: "Returning home Instructions"

1. (75:3) We find a place where we can be quiet for an hour.
2. (75:3) Carefully reviewing what we have done.
3. (75:3) We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better.
4. (75:3) Taking this book down from our shelf we turn to the page which contains the twelve steps. (pg 59).
5. (75:3) Carefully reading the first five proposals.
6. (75:3) We ask if we have omitted anything, for we are building an arch through which we shall walk a free man at last.
7. (75:3) Is our work solid so far?
8. (75:3) Are the stones properly in place?
9. (75:3) Have we skimped on the cement put into the foundation?
10. (75:3) Have we tried to make mortar without sand?

A Quiet Hour Prayer:

"God, Thank You for giving me the strength, faith and courage I needed to get through my 5th Step. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for helping me to know you better, by showing me what has been blocking me from you. Father, please show me if I have omitted anything and help me to honestly see if my stones are properly in place or if I have skimped in any area of this work." (75:3)

It has been said, "We are only as sick as the secrets we keep." Our emotional health as recovering women is hindered, perhaps even jeopardized, each time we hold something within that we need to talk over with others.

Sharing our fears, our hurts, our anger, keeps open our channel to God. Secrets clutter our mind, preventing the stillness within where our prayers find answers. Secrets keep us stuck. Our health, emotional and spiritual, depends on our commitment to shared experiences.

Every secret we have and tell someone, frees that person also to be herself and to grow. Sharing experiences relieves us of our shame and invites the forgiveness we must allow ourselves.

Steps Four and Five facilitate the process of sharing those secrets that block our path to God and to one another. Never can we be fully at peace with secrets left untold. Self-revelation cleanses the soul and offers us life.

Perhaps rather than "forgive and forget," our new adage should become "forgive and live."