

Step Five

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Summary

- We now need to admit the whole truth we have discovered to God, to ourselves, and to another person.
- Despite our commitment to the program, we often find ourselves feeling afraid at this point.
- We expect to be judged harshly and rejected if we tell someone our secrets, especially those acting-out behaviors of which we are most ashamed.
- These fears are only natural, but we cannot allow them to prevent us from taking this step.
- We call on our Higher Power for strength and for the willingness to share our story.
- Although we have recorded a detailed inventory in the Fourth Step, it is a different thing altogether to admit the truth to ourselves.
- We need to be careful to acknowledge the exact nature of our wrongs inwardly, so that denial can give way to acceptance.
- During the Fifth Step, our sponsor will often share his or her own experiences with us, letting us know about similar actions, feelings, and shortcomings.
- Most of us share our Fifth Step with our sponsor.
- Some of us choose a friend in the program, a therapist, a spiritual advisor, or another wise confidant with whom we feel safe.
- We do not take the Fifth Step with our partners, parents, or families.
- Most importantly, we admit the character defects that motivated our actions, such as pride, envy, selfishness, or greed.
- These defects or failings are *the exact nature of our wrongs*.
- We have found that admitting these defects is essential to experiencing a positive breakthrough in our relations with others, and with ourselves.
- They are those aspects of temperament that hold back our spiritual growth and keep us locked in self-defeating habits, attitudes, and beliefs.
- While we might wish to share our entire Fifth Step in one sitting, some of us may in fact need several meetings to complete the entire step. Once we start, we make a commitment to finish it.

Principles

- Integrity
- Honesty
- Courage

Promises

- Admitting our wrongs to God opens the door to change within ourselves.
- With the Fifth Step, we come out into the open.
- If we trust, we will be given the power to acknowledge our shortcomings.
- When we hear ourselves admitting our wrongs to someone, explaining all of the details out loud, our past begins to make sense, and we can start to view our lives with more clarity.
- We discover that the person hearing our Fifth Step will not reject us, but will often respect us for our honesty and courage, and love us all the more.
- Once we finish Step Five, the rewards will prove to have been worth the effort.
- We have acknowledged and taken responsibility for the whole of our being, to ourselves, our fellow addict, and our Higher Power.
- Our deepest acceptance comes when we know that the God of our understanding loves us no matter what we have done.
- The acceptance we receive is a profound spiritual experience.
- Our new awareness leads to a desire for change.
- We go on to Step Six.