

Lesson Plan - Session 17 – Step 4 – Deep, Dark Secrets; Intro Step 5

Time	Activity
0:00	<p>Opening Prayer</p> <p>Plan for the session</p> <p>Catch-up sharing</p> <p>Share Exercise 4.6 – Deep, Dark Secret</p> <p>Introduce Step 5</p> <p>Discuss assignments</p>
0:05	Catch-up sharing
0:20	<p>Share Exercise S4.6 - Deep, Dark Secret</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask each man to read the deep, dark secret of another man in the group. This should take 1-2 minutes each.</li> <li>• Ask if anyone has another of their secrets they would like to share with the group. Not necessary, but someone may want to share a secret that has been a burden - bring it into the light.</li> <li>• When finished, ask if this exercise generated any thoughts or feelings that you would like to share?</li> <li>• Now ask each man to close his eyes and visualize us in a circle around a fire. Ask each man to mentally approach the fire and toss in the written secret that he shared (his own or the one he read). Now visualize the embers or charred paper floating up from the fire. Our secrets have been released to God.</li> <li>• Ask if anyone wants to pray.</li> <li>• Repeat earlier question – did the sharing of our deep, dark secrets generate any thoughts or feelings you would like to share?</li> </ul>
1:00	<p>Intro to Step 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other than any catch-up sharing, we have finished Step 4. Each of you has created a fearless and searching moral inventory. What do we do next?</li> <li>• Intro Step 5 - see Leader Discussion Guide</li> </ul>
1:20	<p>Assignments</p> <p>Review the assignments on the Overview for the next session.</p> <p>If you are behind in the sharing of any exercises, come to next session prepared to share and get current with the rest of the group.</p> <p>Read Step 5</p> <p>Prepare draft of confession – Send draft to designated co-leader for review.</p> <p>Come prepared to share your confession with the group.</p> <p>Final questions or comments</p>
1:25	Closing Prayer
1:30	Adjourn – may leave meeting open for additional discussion

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### Leader Discussion Guide

#### Step 5 Intro – 2 options:

- Time permitting, read Step 5 aloud; ask each man to read a paragraph
- If there is not enough time, share the following summary:
  - Read statement of Step 5 and the accompanying verse from p. 113
    - We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
    - *Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. James 5:16*
  - Share the following comments:
    - Confession is a necessary step toward healing
    - What do we confess?
      - Harm we caused others – see your Step 4 moral inventory
      - Not a clinical disclosure – confess the exact *nature* of .... Details, especially graphic descriptions, are not necessary; usually inappropriate
      - Avoid groveling, self-flagellation, etc.
    - Who do we confess to?
      - God, ourselves, another person
    - What other person?
      - A person with whom we are safe – pastor, elder, close friend, therapist, sponsor, etc.
      - Someone who we trust with our emotional security, that we feel is prepared to hear the exact nature of our wrongs, and will not feel or express condemnation
      - Not our spouse – clinical disclosure shares physical actions, not our moral inventory, especially not our shameful thoughts that might harm them.
      - Not a woman

#### Step 5 Confession – Format

- Often written as a letter – addressed to specific person
- Opening – describe why are you here
  - Engaged in recovery – Christian 12 step program
  - At step 5, confess to another person

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- Receiving needed support as part of group (or therapy, etc.). Important to establish that hearing your confession does not make you their responsibility – not becoming your sponsor, accountability partner, therapist, counselor, etc.
- Share your struggles with sexual purity – again, not necessary to share graphic details, or details. Clear, concise summary is fine.
- Share, from moral inventory, the harm you have caused others, emanating from your:
  - Character defects
  - Resentments
  - Fears
  - Sexual conduct

It is OK to share how God used you and your character assets in spite of your flaws

- Thank person for listening, ask for prayer, and ask for written note of their reaction to hearing your confession.
- Encourage you to make a journal entry or other written note of your recollections of your time together. Things the other person said. Your feelings. Do it the same day. You will forget many things by the next day.

Jesus and the 12 Steps – Denison

The Leper – Matthew 8:1-4

Jesus had just delivered the most famous sermon in history – The Sermon on the Mount.

In Step 4, we identify our faults. In Step 5, we confess them to another person.

Leper: “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.”

Worked the 5<sup>th</sup> step in 10 words:

- Admitted that he was powerless and his life was unmanageable
- Acknowledged that a power greater than himself could make it right (you can make me clean)
- Decided to turn his life and will over to God (if you are willing, implies he is willing)
- Took an honest inventory of himself (not clean)
- Admitted it to God and others

Step 5 – admit to God, ourself, others

- First word – Lord

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- Second, needed to be made clean
- Others – surrounded by crowd, then showed himself to priest

### Other Step 5 stories:

- The Bleeding Woman in Mark 5
- The dying thief in Luke 23:40-41

### Challenge of Step 5 – Secrets Men Keep – Steven Arterburn

- Men want to be respected more than loved
- 85% of Christian men feel disrespected

Men are reluctant to confess their struggles out of fear of being disrespected.

Like the leper, addicts usually live in isolation and loneliness. Only when we admit that our lives are out of control and seek God's care and control can we become well.

We must be desperate for help. Addiction is rooted in isolation, abuse, and trauma, not choice. But living in that addiction is a choice. When we stop minimizing the problems and are desperate to change (feel real urgency), we start to get well.

Jesus instructed the former leper to go see the priest. Only the priest could certify that he was clean, the precursor to reentering society.