**STEP 5, Confess: We confess to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our sins.**

Step 4 is the survey of sin’s damage in our life. Step 5 is an honest admission to yourself, God and trusted friends about what has happened. It’s a step of honesty toward healing, relief, and freedom. When it comes to confessing to a trusted friend or friends, here are some suggestions:

**WHO TO INVITE:**

1. **Invite trusted people with good biblical insight** who are committed to you and will not be hurt or tempted to sin (gossip, judgment, anger, drawn to your sins) by the details of your inventory. Your mentor should be one of these people.
2. **Limit group size.** Feel free to add a few trusted people besides your mentor to hear your inventory, but for a detailed confession, keep the group size small. Two or three people is good because they can provide more input on your sin patterns and idols—but be cautious of including more than five. Share highlights/takeaways with big groups later.
3. **Do not invite someone of the opposite sex without consulting your mentor and leaders.** In most cases, this exclusion also applies to a spouse. Having someone of the opposite sex present could potentially limit your willingness to share everything and cause unintended damage to the listener at this stage of recovery. In later steps, you will discover how to biblically address the items on your inventory with a spouse and others. If both spouses, the mentor, and leaders believe spouse inclusion would be beneficial, it is permissible—but be wise with this decision.
4. **If you are unsure of who else to invite besides your mentor, discuss your questions/concerns with your leaders and mentor.** Consider others who know you and will be a part of your life after recovery, or fellow participants and leaders. If there is no one else, it is ok just to include your mentor.

**HOW TO GO THROUGH AN INVENTORY:**

Sharing your inventory is a humble act of obedience to God. It is a step of faith toward living in the light of God in fellowship with others. By sharing your inventory, you invite the support, strength, and insight of others into your life. James 5:16 says, “Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.”

**Logistics:** Start with prayer. Thank your friend(s) for coming. Briefly summarize your inventory experience, then begin with your resentment inventory, working across the columns for each event. Allow time for your listeners to interact with you and ask questions for clarity—especially at the end of the inventory. Do this for the remaining five inventories. When finished, ask listeners if they see any patterns or consistent idols showing up across inventories, and write their comments down (even if you disagree). When finished, thank everyone again, and ask your mentor to close in prayer.

**IMPORTANT TIPS:**

1. **Reserve an enough of time to share your inventory** so you don't have to rush through it and communicate to your listeners beforehand how long you think it will take. Occasionally, it is necessary to break up sharing inventory into multiple sittings if you think it will take several hours.
2. **Be honest.** Confess the exact nature of your sin. Be authentic. Be humble. Own your sin. Expose all your sinful patterns and idols and bring them into the light. Don’t hold back. If you are afraid to share something, you should probably make sure that you share it (don’t leave major events out).
3. **Share from your inventory worksheets** rather than explaining entire stories for every instance. Keep sharing at a high level. Be sure to point out the “whys”—idols and sinful patterns in each inventory.
4. **Be very specific when clarity is important/necessary, but some details may not be.** For example, share “I had an affair.” But you may not need to go into all of the details of each sexual encounter. Often, summary statements will suffice. Focus on recognizing your sinful behavior, attitudes, and idols rather than deflecting blame onto others or getting lost in the details.
5. **Be respectful/mindful of the people listed in your inventory and those who listen.** If you invite someone listed in your inventory to hear your inventory, consider sharing that part with your mentor separately. If those listening know people listed on your inventory, use wisdom when sharing names.
6. **Allow time for your mentor/friends to speak truth and encouragement into your life**.
7. **Write down the date of your confession in your inventory workbook, and how you feel afterwards.** Embrace that clean, forgiven, grace-filled moment...because Satan will come along and steal it way if you don’t remind yourself of God’s great work in Step 5.