

Spiritual Awakening

Sharing Hope from Tamassee Village

By Jon Holland, CEO of Tamassee Hope Village



Some of us are morning people, and some of us...are not! My wife and I have been married for 27 years, and nearly every morning, I wake up bright eyed and bushy tailed, ready to seize the day. Jenni does not. She often jokes she's not fully awake until 10 am. Her struggles have been constant fodder for teasing, which she rarely appreciates. After "I love you," the words I hear most often before 8 am are playful "Shut up!"

How we wake up in the morning is a good picture of how people experience the spirituality of recovery. The founders of Alcoholics Anonymous spoke frequently about the spiritual awakening people had through the 12 Steps program. Step 12 states, "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs." 12 Steps practitioners find when people surrender their lives and wills to the care of God (Steps 1-3), share their stories and put right their wrongs (Steps 4-9), and live in healthy relationships with God and others (Steps 10-11), they have a profound spiritual awakening. For some, the awakening comes in a moment, but for most, it comes slowly over time.

In John 3, Nicodemus visited Jesus by night. Jesus told him, "If you want to enter God's kingdom, you must be born again from above." Jesus told this Jewish teacher he needed a spiritual awakening. We aren't told how Nicodemus responded, but a few chapters later, he covertly defends Jesus. Then after the crucifixion, Nicodemus helps another Jewish leader bury Jesus' body. Tradition says Nicodemus become a devoted follower of Jesus who worked miracles. Unlike Saul of Tarsus who was awakened in an instant by the resurrected Jesus on the road to Damascus, Nicodemus' spiritual awakening came slowly, but as it came, it changed his life forever.



The spiritual awakening of the 12 Steps leads to a new wisdom, love, and power. As I surrender self-will to God's will, I discover God knows best how to guide my life and how much he cares for me. As I follow his day to day guidance, I discover the strength to do as he leads. Over time, this

produces life transformation. I become not just a different person but the person he made me to be. Of course, life transformation also means freedom from addiction. Early AA participants found people who sincerely followed the 12 Steps often recovered in about 90 days! Sobriety is one thing, but a whole new life, becoming my true and best self, that's something more entirely. This is the promise and reality of the 12 Steps!



At Starlight at Tamassee, we believe mothers in recovery can have a genuine and life-changing spiritual awakening through the 12 Steps and a relationship with Jesus. To learn more about Starlight, visit <https://www.mytamassee.org/starlight/>, or contact us at starlight@mytamassee.org or 864-944-1390. If your church or civic group is interested in a presentation on recovery, contact Jon Holland at jholland@mytamassee.org.

Images in this blog are taken from Season 1 of the streaming series The Chosen.

