

Five Necessary Steps You Should Take When Dealing with Guilt

Guilt is a phenomenon that is often accompanied by painful emotions and is therefore something that must be confronted in ourselves. Theologian Horace Bushnell wrote “guilt is the very nerve, of sorrow.” But guilt is also the mind’s way of helping us recognize when we have made wrong choices. When we confront our guilty feelings and deal with them effectively, the process can be a beneficial aspect of spiritual and psychological growth. This article provides 5 critical steps for dealing with guilt.

1. Don’t spend time in Self Blame

While it is important to acknowledge you have made a bad choice and accepting responsibility is part of that, engaging in continual self blame is self defeating. Keep in mind blaming never helped anyone correct a wrong or overcome a bad habit. Experiencing guilt is not a bad thing; it is the way we know we have violated our personal code of right and wrong. It is refusing to accept and deal with guilt that results in negative and destructive habits.

2. Let others take responsibility for their actions

There is no virtue in carrying the guilt of another person. In fact it is absolutely destructive.

It is important that each of us accept responsibility for our own actions.

3. Understand the connection between guilt and grace

Grace is to give a second chance to one who does not deserve it. Forgiveness is an act of grace since in forgiving someone, you accept that a wrong toward you has been committed. But the choice is made to release the past and start over. The sacred text teaches divine forgiveness is based on grace toward the offender.

4. Practice self forgiveness

Forgiveness is the irreplaceable antidote for guilt. Keep in mind you don’t have to deserve forgiveness in order for it to be granted. Forgiveness is an act of grace which is to give favor when it is not deserved. Even if you think or believe you do not deserve forgiveness, go ahead and give to yourself. It is your key to freedom.

5. Release the need to be wrong

One of the most powerful though often unconscious needs underlying guilt is the need to be wrong so that you can continue doing wrong while feeling bad about it. If you can hold on to your history of wrong choices, you can point to them as evidence of your inability to take the necessary actions to deal with yourself. That in turn gives you permission to continue your self destructive course. Release the need and live free of guilt.

*Conroy Reynolds
Chaplain*

My Relapse

I had a slip, I took a nip
And my world came tumbling down.

The promises were coming true,
Why then was I feeling blue?

I had sobriety, I thought I had recovery
I thought my journey was done,
I didn’t realize it had just begun.

I did the 4th step, so I thought.
And for many years, happiness it brought.

But I had only dusted off the step,
I found I needed to work with much
more depth.

My Therapist brought out my fears,
I had buried for so many years.

My Sponsor helped me through the tears,
A one year cake I’ll take this year.

So step by step, I’m coming back
I’ve learned to stay with the pack.

The gift of recovery,
Is finding the authentic me.

So God – please stay close
You’re the one I need the most.

I have surrendered to thee,
I know you’ll take good care of me.

Carol M.



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE CENTER

Staying with Sobriety

Chemical Dependency Services
1710 Barton Road
Redlands, CA 92373

Please write to the address below if you wish to have your name removed from the list to receive announcements or notices introducing new services, health educational programs and events, or products of Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine Center. All reasonable efforts will be taken to ensure that your request is honored.

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245 East Redlands Blvd. Suite A
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Staying with Sobriety

FALL 2009

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We want to hear from you

To inspire our readers and recognize your accomplishments, we would like to feature your story in one of our upcoming newsletters. Please send us a personal article or poem depicting your experience with addiction and/or alcoholism to:

Attn: Elaine Coyazo
LLUBMC, 1710 Barton Road
Redlands, CA 92373

The Sober Living Experience

As a student intern at Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine Center (LLUBMC), I was given the opportunity to research the sober living homes as a way to educate new patients about the living opportunities available for them. In the process, I was able to visit the homes to meet with the house managers, and talk to sober living residents about their experience.



Sober living is offered to outpatients at LLUBMC as an opportunity to live with others who are early in the addiction recovery process. The homes were established by the Recovering Alumni Association (RAA Inc.), to provide a safe and sober environment for newly recovering men and women. The sober living homes are run by live-in house managers who are active participants in a 12-step recovery

program. I met with the managers and recognized that they were very caring and committed to the sober living residents. The managers work to create an enjoyable living experience for everyone as it is also their home.

The goal of the sober living home is to give individuals an opportunity to grow with other recovering men or women in a comfortable atmosphere that is free from drugs and alcohol. The homes also provide convenient living quarters close to LLUBMC and transportation to LLUBMC for outpatients who are in treatment.

Some of the individuals who have resided in the sober living homes shared with me their own experiences of learning and growing alongside others who are in similar situations in the recovery process.

One gentleman shared, "My time at the men's sober living home was an essential



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Dr. Whyte joins the Chemical Dependency Team

A recent graduate in Addiction Medicine from the University of California, Los Angeles, Dr. Ricardo Whyte is enthusiastic to serve as the Medical Director of the Chemical Dependency Program here at LLUBMC. When asked where his passion for addiction medicine first came about, he attributed it to his early childhood experience with alcoholism in his family. That initially piqued his interest but later on it was the love for the human story that inspired him to pursue his training in psychiatry and addiction medicine. "The field of addiction medicine is an integration of spirituality, biochemistry, forensics, philosophy, and psychology. The blending of disciplines is what I find quite fascinating and intriguing," comments Dr. Whyte.



Already, Dr. Whyte sees many strengths and opportunities for the Chemical Dependency Program. What really impressed him was how diverse specialties naturally come together as a team to provide safe, competent, and compassionate care for the patient. He sees genuine interaction between staff and the patients where true healing

is taking place. Also, being part of a University Health System, patients receive leading edge treatment that has proven efficacy. Dr. Whyte is pleased not only with patient care, but also the opportunities available to advance treatment practices through research by partnering with clinicians and faculty.

Dr. Whyte was asked what challenges he sees in the near future for those who are suffering from addictions, especially with the downturn in our economy and the lack of addiction services within our community. He commented with great conviction, "That is a responsibility we have to take on to ensure our patients get the best treatment and leave with the skills and tools to stay on the path of recovery." Those in recovery are encouraged to not

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At a Glance

Inland Empire AA Convention

October 16, 17, 18 2009

Hilton Hotel

San Bernardino, California

Come and join the fellowship and fun. There will be marathon AA and Al-Anon meetings including speaker meetings and young people meetings. There will also be lots of fun events including a golf tournament, bowling tournament, banquet, dances, and a motorcycle ride. Registration is \$15, with additional costs for individual activities.

For more information, contact Nancy P. at 909-210-9317 or e-mail NJP60@yahoo.com or Dick P. at 951-288-7289 *day* or 909-793-8849 *evening*

The Recovering Alumni Association (RAA) invites all previous LLUBMC CD patients and their families to join in fellowship and fun each Thursday night at 6:00 p.m. in the LLUBMC gymnasium.

In addition to their regular meetings, RAA has several upcoming events for the holiday season.

Hoe-Down

Sunday, November 1, 2009

Hoe-Down will feature music, fellowship, learning to square dance, and laughter. Sandwiches will be provided with potluck for snacks and dessert.

Gratitude Dinner

Sunday, November 22, 2009

Gratitude Dinner will feature lots of great food to go along with the great fellowship. Bring your family and friends. Turkey and hams will be provided, but please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

Annual Christmas Caroling

Thursday, December 17, 2009

Come and lend your voices in the spirit of the season.

New Year's Eve Party

Thursday, December 31, 2009

The New Year's Eve Party will provide a sober, fun place to spend the holiday evening with sober friends. This year the theme is Rock and Roll, 60s style. There will be lots of food, games, and music.

For further information on any of these events call Darlene H. 909-792-9005.

Family Connection: How Does Sober Living Affect the Families of Addicts and Alcoholics in Recovery?

According to Wikipedia, sober living grew out of a need to have safe and supportive places for people to live while they are in recovery. They are primarily meant to provide housing for people who have just come out of rehab (or recovery centers) and need a place to live that is structured and supportive for those in recovery. However, for families of addicts and alcoholics, sober living can mean much more than that.

While those with a chemical dependency are going through recovery for drugs and alcohol, they are learning new tools to learn how to cope with life in a sober fashion. They learn what their triggers are, what pushes their buttons, how to face life in an honest manner. What are family members doing for *their* recovery while the addicts

and alcoholics are in treatment? Are you asking yourself, what does “their recovery” mean? Think about all the family has been through while dealing with someone in their addiction. There have been ups, downs, heartache, anger, sadness, and worry. Families need recovery also.

So what does sober living do for the family? It gives the family a time to adjust to the changes. It gives them time to learn more about what they should and should not do when dealing with the addict or alcoholic in recovery. It gives them time to come to Family Support Group, Al-Anon or CODA to learn how to establish boundaries and how to take care of themselves before the addict or alcoholic comes home. Families may have certain expectations

of what they need when the family member comes home from recovery and having a family member stay in sober living gives the family time to develop these expectations.

So when your addict or alcoholic’s counselor encourages them to go to sober living consider it a part of your recovery, also, and take advantage of the time you have to learn a new way of living with your recovering family member before they return home.

*Roberta Reid, MS, LMFT
Family Therapist*

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The Sober Living Experience

part of my rehabilitation at LLUBMC. I don’t think my recovery from addiction would have been possible were it not for the men who taught me how to stay sober and how to have genuine relationships.”

One of the women related, “Sober living has provided an important transition from the inpatient program to a safe living environment with other women in recovery. It provides an opportunity to continue recovery education and develop a support group and not feel overwhelmed by immediately jumping back into family, work, or previous living situations.”

From my experience, I learned that sober living is designed with new patients in mind to help them on their lifelong journey of sobriety. As one patient shared, “Sober living has provided me with a bridge to go from treatment to recovery.”



The initial treatment process can be a difficult and trying time for anyone. Sober living is a place to minimize distractions and difficulties that can be detrimental in the recovery process and offer an opportunity for learning, growth, friendship, and bonding in the face of personal struggles.

*Adrianna Parsons
Recreation Therapy Intern*

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Dr. Whyte joins the Chemical Dependency Team

only avoid addictive substances, but they need to truly embrace the fullness of life by reclaiming what they have lost when they were drinking or using. Dr. Whyte implores them to take on challenges and hobbies they did not previously pursue—whether it is enhancing their spirituality, clarifying work goals or connecting with lost relationships.

“For those who have relapsed”, Dr. Whyte explains, “know that it is part of the recovery process. Recovery should be pursued with stubbornness especially after relapse, and LLUBMC is here to help you back on that journey toward recovery.”

Huma Shah, MPH, CHES