

Physical, Emotional and Sexual Abuse

The Problem

We have experienced some form of abuse, which has damaged our emotions and identity in ways that continue to affect us. We have developed incorrect ideas about life and destructive ways of dealing with the pain. This is harmful to us emotionally and physically, and damages our relationships with others. We need healing from the traumas done to us. We also need healing from the influence these experiences continue to have in our present lives.

The Solution

By actually working through the Christ-centered 12 Steps and 8 Recovery Principles with Jesus Christ as our Higher Power, we can and will change. We experience the true peace and serenity we have been seeking when we admit we are powerless to heal ourselves from the effects of abuse and give our lives and our wills over to the care of God. It is only when we become dependent on God for our happiness, believing that His plan for us includes victory over the abuse, that we stop living and reliving the past and experience complete and lasting emotional healing.

Here we learn a new way of living. We recognize that the persons who abused us are responsible for their abusive acts and we reject the guilt and shame resulting from those acts. We look to God and His Word to find our identity and standards for living. We honestly share our feelings with God and others to help us identify those areas that need cleansing and healing. We accept responsibility for our responses to the abuse. We rely on God as we go through the process of forgiving ourselves and our perpetrators. This enables us to establish and fully participate in healthy relationships and share this life-changing message with others.

Those of us who have experienced life change through this program encourage you to keep coming back. It works, by God's power, if you work it.

Recovery From Physical, Emotional and Sexual Abuse

This is a Christ-centered group for those in recovery from past physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse. Our common background is a history of abuse and our goal is to enter into or maintain recovery. Recovery for us is a two-fold issue. We need healing from the traumas done to us. We also need healing from the influence these experiences continue to have on our lives.

For the newcomer, this group and the rewritten 12 Steps are a place to recognize and identify core issues resulting from abuse. For the "old-timer", this group is a place to continue the recovery process. Both receive validation, understanding and the knowledge of appropriate action to take by practicing the 12 Steps among Christians.

One of our objectives is to provide a supportive, safe environment. This must be a group effort. We respect and acknowledge each person's right to be where they are on their own road to recovery. We acknowledge the sensitivity we need to have for each member of this group. Therefore, we have a list of reminders that are not meant to offend but to ensure the safety and anonymity of each person present. "Who you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, stays here."

As with any other Christ-centered recovery group, we believe that by our participation through active listening, sharing and application of the 12 Steps to our lives, the Holy Spirit guides us to further understanding, healing and wholeness. We are not here to lecture, preach, fix or provide therapy. We are here to tell our story. We come together to share in our weakness, for it is in our weakness that we gain strength. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 says *"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: if one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."* (NIV)

There are other advantages for coming together as a group. One is accountability. We can look to others to honestly let us know how we are doing in our recovery. Old-timers or sponsors can help us see where we may be stuck or provide us with a safe sounding board so that we can hear ourselves.

Another advantage is the sharing of encouragement. The center of the word encouragement is courage. Sometimes we need others around us who have been there to give us courage to be where we are or to take action.

The group also provides a support system for recovery. Here we find we are not alone; others share similar stories. Support can be expanded to include phone calls with other willing members of the group. Support will hopefully include seeking out a sponsor for added encouragement.

Another important advantage is the prayer support. We can join together in prayer against Satan's strongholds that keep us from maturing as Christians or keep us from recovery.

One last advantage is that together we multiply the witness of Christ. We're not an accident. We reflect Christ's grace and love as we move through recovery.