




# Dealing With Shame & Guilt

SUBSTANCE ABUSE



Active addiction pushes us to do things we wouldn't normally do.

When you're addicted to something you have to find a way to get the thing you are addicted to. It doesn't matter how you get it or who you hurt in the process.



The addict relieves the pain of guilt and shame by using more of their drug of choice.

When the recovery process begins, the addict is flooded with memories of all the things they wish they could undo.



Addicts aren't the only people who feel guilt and shame. **Everyone** has done something in their lives that they have regretted.

***Everyone could benefit from learning to let go of feelings of guilt and shame.***

Guilt and shame serve an important purpose in our lives.

Guilt is our conscience.

***Guilt warns us that we need to stop and do something different.***



When we ignore our feelings of guilt and continue to do what we believe is wrong, we feel **shame.**

**Shame is when we internalize guilt and begin to believe we are a bad person.**

We lie and cover up our wrongs.

***Hiding our wrongs only leads to more guilt and shame.***





# Breaking the cycle of guilt and shame


1. Face our wrongs
2. Correct our wrongs
3. Asking for forgiveness
4. Forgiving Ourselves



# How Do We Face Our Wrongs?



Thoroughly processing a wrong from your past can help you avoid the same mistake in the future.



Think about the wrong you committed  
and brainstorm ideas for how to make  
up for it. Bounce your ideas off close  
friends and family.






**If you believe it would  
help the situation to  
directly approach the  
person to ask for  
forgiveness, set up a time  
to meet with the person.**





# How Do We Forgive Ourselves?

1. Talk Therapy
2. Writing Therapy
3. Symbolic Forgiveness
4. Prayer And Meditation
5. Mindfulness Meditation
6. Imagery
7. Self-Talk



Talk to other people and find out  
how they would handle the  
situation.





Should you act impulsively and it results in behavior  
that causes you to feel guilt or shame,

***correct the situation as soon as you  
become aware of it.***



**DON'T ALLOW THE PAST  
TO KEEP YOU STUCK.  
LEARN FROM IT, LET  
GO, AND MOVE ON. 🖐️**


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Guilt and shame can lead to relapse.

Addicts generally have difficulty coping with any feelings that we perceive as negative.







Facing feelings, correcting wrongs, asking for forgiveness and forgiving ourselves are ways to let go of the past so you can grow as a person and fully live in the present moment. Once we have done this, the guilt and shame will be resolved so we don't feel the need to return to our old coping skills of using substance to cover these feelings.



**"CHANGE  
YOUR  
THOUGHTS  
AND YOU'LL  
CHANGE  
YOUR  
WORLD"**